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Islamic Affairs

ICO Ready To Mediate in Afghan-Tajik Situation

LD1604183695 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1747 GMT 16 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 16 Apr, SPA—Dr. Hamed Algabid, the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [ICO] has expressed serious concern over the deterioration of the situation along the borders between Afghanistan and Tajikistan following the attack on the Taloqan region. Both countries are members of the ICO and therefore it is necessary that within the framework of the solidarity between ICO members, they should seek to ease the tension in the region by respecting each other's internal affairs and internationally recognized borders, he added.

In a press release today the ICO secretary general has renewed the ICO's support for the efforts under way by UN and regional groups to encourage reconciliation and the ICO's readiness to take part in such efforts.

Muslim World League Appeals on Behalf of Chechens

LD1604195095 Riyadh SPA in English 1926 GMT 16 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mecca, April 16, SPA—The Moslem World League (MWL) has appealed to all Moslems to respond to the kind call made by Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin Baz, the grand mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, chairman of the senior ulema authority and general president of the general directorates of scientific research and ifta for raising money to help the Chechen Moslem people in resisting the aggression.

A statement issued by the Mecca-based league said the donations would help the Moslem people of the Chechen Republic which is struggling against injustice and aggression.

The statement denounced the passive stand of the international community over what is going on in Chechnya and added that the Chechen people is in a bad need for moral and material support for the Islamic world as stipulated by the Islamic teachings that call for cooperation and support of Moslems anywhere.

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 11 Apr

NC1604065695

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 11 April edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Group Threatens To Attack, U.S., British Troops in Peninsula
2. Egypt Reportedly To Abstain on NPT Renewal
3. Hamas Spokesman Criticizes Palestinian Authority
4. U.S. Plan To Reduce Aid to Egypt Cited
5. Islamic Trend "Achieves Victory" in Teachers Elections
6. Labor Party Leader Supports Libyans' Right to Pilgrimage
7. MB Official Comments on Recent Islamic Conference in Khartoum
8. Authorities Force Citizens To Collaborate Against Islamists
9. Writer Accuses Interior Minister of Punishing Islamic Trend

GROUP THREATENS TO ATTACK U.S., BRITISH TROOPS IN PENINSULA

An unattributed 130-word, front-page report says the "Islamic Change Movement, the Jihad Wing in the Arab Peninsula" has issued a statement threatening to confront the troops, which it describes as crusaders, stationed in the Arab Peninsula, be they U.S. or British.

EGYPT REPORTEDLY TO ABSTAIN ON NPT RENEWAL

An unattributed 420-word, front-page report cites a "diplomatic source" at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry as telling AL-SHA'B that Egypt is heading toward abstaining on the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT].

HAMAS SPOKESMAN CRITICIZES PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah criticizes the Palestinian Authority in a 750-word report on pages 1 and 6 by Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah on the situation in Gaza after recent bombings.

The report says: "In exclusive statements to AL-SHA'B, Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah criticized the Palestinian Authority's stance and its arrest campaigns. He said there are red lines that should not be crossed and that the movement cannot restrain forever its members who are suffering from the authority's harassments."

Ghawshah accused the Israeli authorities of plotting for the Shaykh Radwan "massacre" and said a joint security committee was formed between the Israeli intelligence Shin Bet and the Palestinian security agencies a few days before the massacre.

U.S. PLAN TO REDUCE AID TO EGYPT CITED

A 200-word report on page 1 by Mahmud Bakri says: "AL-SHA'B has learned that Washington has devised a definitive program to reduce U.S. aid to Egypt prior to cutting the aid completely." The report adds that a special committee from the State Department and Congress has prepared a timetable to reduce the aid. The plan calls for reducing the aid by more than 40 percent in 1996 and to make a further 30 percent cut in the following year, 1997. The report says the aid will be cut completely in the year 2000.

ISLAMIC TREND "ACHIEVES VICTORY" IN TEACHERS ELECTIONS

'Abd-al-Hay Muhammad files a 250-word report on page 1 on the postponement of byelections of the Teachers Union.

The report says the Islamic trend has achieved a "great victory" in the elections of three provincial teachers unions in al-Sharqiyah, al-Buhayrah, and al-Mansurah.

LABOR PARTY LEADER SUPPORTS LIBYANS' RIGHT TO PILGRIMAGE

An unattributed 230-word report on the same page says that Labor Party leader Ibrahim Shukri has announced "the party's absolute support for the Libyans' right to perform pilgrimage rituals by air as a religious cause that cannot tolerate bargaining." He welcomed the Saudi authorities' agreement to receive Libyan pilgrims traveling by air as long as they carry entry visas.

Shukri, the report says, urged the Egyptian authorities to cooperate with Libya to open the Egyptian airspace and provide assistance to Libyan aircraft when they cross Egyptian airspace bound for the holy land.

Shukri says: "We reject the unjust blockade that has been imposed for years on the Libyan people for flimsy reasons."

The report cites Shukri as rejecting the White House spokesman's statements opposing the Libyan leader's "idea" to send pilgrims to Saudi Arabia aboard Libyan planes. He asks the U.S. authorities to "consider the Muslims' religious feelings when they talk about changing their stance and their readiness to understand the manifestations of the Islamic upsurge in the world." He adds that this stance is a new test for the U.S. Administration's good intentions toward the Islamic world.

MB OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON RECENT ISLAMIC CONFERENCE IN KHARTOUM

Mustafa Mashhur, deputy general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood [MB], compiles a 1,200-word report on page 5 on the agenda of the Islamic Popular Conference held in Khartoum between 30 March and 1 April.

He says he was invited to the conference representing the MB and that representatives from more than 80 countries were present. He adds that the conference "was a good opportunity for the delegates to explain the circumstances of those they represented and the acts of repression, killing, displacement, detention, and torture they are experiencing." He continues: "All delegates shared the sense of pain and were moved by what was said. They showed distinct feeling that the Islamic nation is one nation and one body. We heard about every tragedy of countries, groups, or minorities from their genuine sources, including heart-rending reports we heard for the first time because of the media blackout imposed by the enemies, especially the Jews."

He notes that the conference's agenda contained three topics. These were: Developments in the Palestine cause, the "Zionist enemy's domination and arrogance, and the capitulation by the self-rule authorities and some of the cordon states."

The second topic, he says, was "that ferocious campaign staged by the enemies against Islam and Muslims from various hostile sources, such as the Serbs, Russians, Zionists, Hindus, NATO, and many others, in addition to the West's unease with Islam as the common enemy after the disintegration of communism."

He says the conferees discussed "the foreign enemies' role in pressuring certain ruling regimes in the Arab and Islamic countries to strike and curb the activity of all Islamic movements and justify their action by leveling false charges." The aim, he adds, "is to make the people shun these movements' members, although they are moderate and to prevent these groups from practicing their legitimate rights under the constitution to establish parties, publish newspapers, participate in parliamentary councils, and assume power." He notes that the "enemies pressure governments exploiting their need for aid or canceling debts, or their weakness in defending themselves."

Mashhur says the third topic on the agenda was "the Islamic minorities, their suffering in their countries, and the need to support and protect these minorities from hostile attacks." During the deliberations, he adds, it was apparent that Muslims in some countries represent a majority and yet they are treated as minorities. They are governed by non-Muslim minorities, which treat them as second-class citizens, "as is the case in some West African states," he notes. Discussion, he says, also dealt with the "repression and killing suffered by some Islamic minorities in the West these days, like what is happening to Turks in Germany and to people from the north African states of Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya in France and elsewhere."

AUTHORITIES FORCE CITIZENS TO COLLABORATE AGAINST ISLAMISTS

Page 6 runs an unattributed 65-word report saying that "the State Security Detective Agency in Shubra is forcing the citizens to collaborate with it as informers against the Islamists."

The report adds that the detective agency released a named youth after arresting him four times and torturing him because he refused to work as an informer against citizens of Qalyub City.

WRITER ACCUSES INTERIOR MINISTER OF PUNISHING ISLAMIC TREND

In an approximately 400-word article on page 12, writer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus hopes that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa will be able to persuade the president to stick to his stand on signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. He also assails Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi, saying he is behind human rights violations.

Noting that the minister had an "honorable record" before he took the ministerial portfolio, the writer says: "Regrettably, he committed grave mistakes that degraded his stature in the people's view." His first crime, the writer say, was the crushing of innocent people during his war on terrorism. He adds: "Ask the Upper Egypt inhabitants what happened to them. The thousands of detainees jailed in my country's prisons without trial are the best proof that what I am saying is true. His second crime is that he severely punished the Islamic trend, which rejects violence because it commands popularity in the Egyptian streets. He also infringed on the trade unions and arrested many of their leading members."

Political Islam Review: AL-NUR 12 Apr

NC1604194895

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 12 April edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-NUR that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Islamic Ulema Reject Economic Dealings With Israel
2. Preacher Says Peace With Israel Religiously Unacceptable
3. Islamic League Chief Sees Vicious Anti-Islam Media Campaign
4. Islamic Movement Is Only Force Able To Liberate Palestine
5. Authorities Ban Prominent Shaykh From Mosque Preaching
6. Teachers Removed From Posts for Islamic Tendencies
7. Columnist Urges Peaceful Preaching, Condemns Violence
8. Implementation of Koranic Teachings Ends Subservience to West
9. UN-Sponsored Education Plan Said To Destroy Islamic Identity
10. Lifting of Ban on Controversial Film Causes Popular Resentment
11. Rights Organizations Criticized for Defending al-'Ashmawi

ISLAMIC ULEMA REJECT ECONOMIC DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL

Keying on Israel's participation in Cairo's International Fair, Rajab al-Damanhuri in a 600-word report on page 1 cites some Islamic ulema on whether economic dealings with Israel are religiously acceptable. Dr. Jalal al-Din 'Abd-al-Rahman, a jurisprudence professor at al-Azhar University, says Muslims must boycott the Israelis and reject their commodities. He argues: "The Jews want Egypt and the Arab world to be ruined so that Israel can control their economy, food, and water, and so that the Arabs will live in humiliation and subjugation by the Zionists, the enemies of God." He concludes: "Muslims should be careful that they do not become slaves to the Jews; and the [Egyptian] Government should cease its arrogance and work for the good of the country and the people." Islamic preacher Dr. 'Abd-al-Rashid Saqr reportedly states that "dealings with Israel and with Jewish commodities are never acceptable." He adds: "It is absolutely impermissible to deal with the Zionists, who have looted our wealth, violated our honor, and desecrated our sanctities."

PREACHER SAYS PEACE WITH ISRAEL RELIGIOUSLY UNACCEPTABLE

Page 4 contains a 1,500-word interview with renowned Islamic preacher Shaykh Ahmad al-Mahallawi conducted by Taha Khattab. The date and place of the interview are not given. Shaykh al-Mahallawi discusses peace with Israel, the problems of preaching, the Russian operation in Chechnya, and the future of the Islamic nation. On peace with Israel, he says: "God and his prophet did not allow peace with the Jews." He notes that although Prophet Muhammad observed a truce with the Jews in his time, he did not establish relations with them, and he points out that the Jews at that time were not occupying Muslim territory. Shaykh al-Mahallawi concludes: "Peace between Muslims and Jews while the Jews are still occupying Muslim land and desecrating our mosques is not religiously acceptable. No Muslim ulema past or present has issued any fatwas to the contrary." To the interviewer's remark that a leading Saudi mufti has sanctioned peace with Israel, Shaykh al-Mahallawi notes that many Muslim scholars have given enough evidence to refute the Saudi fatwa. Of a remark by Egypt's mufti that he is willing to visit Israel, al-Mahallawi says: "May God forgive this scholar who expressed a willingness to visit Israel. This is not the first time he has done things like this. He issued many fatwas in the past which the ulema refuted." Shaykh al-Mahallawi praises Egypt's position on the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and warns against any retreat from this position. He warns against Israeli attempts to infiltrate the Arab and Muslim world and blames the Islamic countries for imposing an embargo against Libya and Iraq.

ISLAMIC LEAGUE CHIEF SEES VICIOUS ANTI-ISLAM MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Page 2 features a 1,200-word interview with Dr. Ahmad Muhammad 'Ali, secretary general of the Muslim World League, conducted by correspondent 'Ali Sabir. The date and place of the interview are not given. Dr. 'Ali discusses the role played by the League in supporting Islamic action and the possibility of establishing an Islamic common market. Asked about the challenges the League is now facing, he says: "Very regrettably, there is a vicious worldwide media campaign against Islam. This is the most serious challenge to Islamic action at the international level. Therefore, we must work to clarify the position of Islam, explain the message of Islam, and stress that our religion is against any kind of extremism." 'Ali says the moderation of Islam must be explained to the Western media. "Western media are spreading their venom all over the world, so we must move vigorously to explain the moderation of Islam," he says. Dr. 'Ali explains that the Muslim World League, a nongovernmental organization, works to achieve Islamic cooperation and bring Islamic institutions closer. He notes Saudi support for the League and urges all other Muslim countries to support it. He maintains that the time is not right for establishing an Islamic common market because cooperation among the Islamic countries must come first.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT IS ONLY FORCE ABLE TO LIBERATE PALESTINE

An unattributed 300-word report on page 1 cites Lieutenant General Sa'd al-Din al-Shadhili, former Egyptian chief of staff, as telling the newspaper that "the Islamic movement is the only faction capable of not only liberating Palestine, but also of correcting the situation of the Arab world." He states: "Every believer fully believes that there must be a decisive war between us and the Jews because the Koran and the sunnah [Prophet Muhammad's tradition] emphasize this. The Koran and the strategic situation prove that victory will go to the Muslims, God willing." Al-Shadhili says Egypt cannot possibly sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty while Israel retains its powerful nuclear arsenal. He warns the Egyptian Government against trusting Israeli intentions or promises.

AUTHORITIES BAN PROMINENT SHAYKH FROM MOSQUE PREACHING

An unattributed 150-word report on page 1 says the Egyptian authorities banned Shaykh Fawzi al-Sa'id, "a prominent preacher in and out of Cairo," from preaching in his Cairo mosque after accusations by the security agencies that he had agitated for the overthrow of the government. The report says that the preacher has nothing to do with politics and that the ban came after a distorted report in a "secular magazine".

TEACHERS REMOVED FROM POSTS FOR ISLAMIC TENDENCIES

A 150-word report by Jihad al-Kurdi on page 1 says that in the past few days the education minister transferred a group of teachers to administrative jobs and moved them to other governorates "because of their Islamic tendencies." The report cites a statement by the Trade Unions Coordination Committee that 160 male and female teachers have been moved to administrative jobs. The report says the teachers were surprised by the transfers as no charges were leveled against them and they were not interrogated. The report says that the Lawyers Syndicate's Freedoms Committee has decided to sue the minister and defend the teachers.

COLUMNIST URGES PEACEFUL PREACHING, CONDEMNS VIOLENCE

AL-NUR's chairman of the board, al-Hamzah Di'bis, begins his 1,200-word editorial on page 1 by discussing how a world boxing champion Mike Tyson, who was once one of the world's "most vicious people," completely changed after he embraced Islam while in prison. He was released because of his good conduct. Di'bis says that Tyson became a different man after he heard good preaching about Islam and its teachings from former boxing champion Muhammad 'Ali. Di'bis then comes to his point: "What lesson can those criminal terrorists who are killing innocent people in the name of Islam learn from this?" He explains that the way to call people for Islam and spread the word of God is not violence and terrorism, but good counselling and peaceful argument. Maintaining that the killing of peaceful Muslims "is the highest degree of treachery," Di'bis says the terrorists' resorting to killing "not only negates their status as believers, but also shows their ignorance of or hostility to Islam, not their love for it or concern about it."

IMPLEMENTATION OF KORANIC TEACHINGS ENDS SUBSERVIENCE TO WEST

A 500-word report by Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad on page 3 cites an exclusive statement by Dr. Muhammad al-Bari, a professor at al-Azhar's Faculty of Preaching, that the establishment of an Islamic market is the Muslims' main weapon for ending the Western economic monopoly. He explains how the Prophet Muhammad did this in the early Islamic state to end the Jews' monopoly and exploitation of the market. He concludes: "If the teachings of the Koran are put into practice, Muslims will prosper and end their subservience to the West, which seeks to starve Muslims so that they will always remain dependent on it."

UN-SPONSORED EDUCATION PLAN SAID TO DESTROY ISLAMIC IDENTITY

A 1,500-word report by Jihad al-Kurdi on page 3 discusses a UNICEF-sponsored "Education for Peace" program reportedly being implemented in Egypt in cooperation with the Ministries of Education and Culture. One of the headlines for the article reads: "The Project Earmarks $80 Million To Obliterate Islamic Identity." The writer says that AL-NUR has obtained documents and papers on the "serious" $80 million project that is being implemented in "complete secrecy" on 15 million school children in Egypt. The 10-year project reportedly encourages school children, through text books and other activities, to develop peaceful attitudes, to show tolerance toward others, and to learn to solve disputes peacefully. It calls for giving children enough care before they grow up and begin to make decisions and constitute a pressure group on the government in regard to future peace issues. The reporter says that the consultants and executives chosen by UNICEF to implement the program "are known for their secular attitudes," and he accuses some of them of being close to the Jews and Americans or of having a hand in expunging the Islamic identity from Egyptian educational curricula.

Al-Kurdi says that those in charge of the program held four "secret" meetings, the last of which was attended by the education minister, on beginning implementation of the project. He says that after the meeting, the education minister issued orders "to include concepts of peace in the curricula and to cancel any text books that incite violence, war, or hatred of others."

The reporter says that a poll of a sample of children before the implementation of the project showed that Egypt's children are against peace with Israel as long as it occupies Arab lands. "Nevertheless, the implementation of the suspect project began to achieve its venomous long-term objectives." What makes the program more suspicious, the al-Kurdi says, is the fact that Israel adamantly refused to use a similar program with its children, "stressing that its children do not need such a project no matter what aid it will bring to Israel." The reporter contends that the project "blots out the meanings of jihad, heroism, martyrdom, and the right to defend the land from the minds of our children so that they will be raised with a distorted sense of identity."

LIFTING OF BAN ON CONTROVERSIAL FILM CAUSES POPULAR RESENTMENT

A 250-word report by correspondent Majdi al-Daghir on page 1 says that general resentment prevailed in Egyptian streets and universities after a court ruling removed the ban on "The Emigrant," a controversial film that allegedly depicts the story of the Prophet Joseph. The report says that the Culture Ministry's decision to show the film is a "challenge to the al-Azhar, the Islamic Research Council, and all Islamic symbols in the country." The report says the decision to release the film for public viewing came after efforts by the film director to distort the image of al-Azhar. The report adds that the General League of the Islamic Group at the Egyptian universities issued a statement to explain the "slanders and abuses" contained in the film.

RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS CRITICIZED FOR DEFENDING AL-'ASHMAWI

A 400-word article by Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad on page 5 criticizes humans right organizations for defending and adopting the views of "secular writer" Sa'id al-'Ashmawi, a known critic of political Islam groups. The writer begins by noting that a recent statement by a human rights organization calls for "uprooting religious fanaticism from state-owned media and from educational curricula and policies." He says the human rights organization is demanding this because Islamic ulema and thinkers have refuted al-'Ashmawi's claims about the Koran and his "defamation of Islam." Noting that an American human rights organization awarded its 1994 prize to al-'Ashmawi, the writer says: "It is noteworthy that the trend in the Western literary, intellectual, and political circles, which claim to defend human rights, is to honor anyone who attacks Islam and its symbols and award him the highest prizes." "Thus," the writer concludes, "anyone who sells out his religion becomes a martyr for freedom; he finds platforms to polish his image and scores of people and organizations to adopt his thought."

Palestinian Affairs

Hamas Said To Propose Truce, Halt to Armed Acts

TA1804142295 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 17 Apr 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A high-ranking Palestinian source has said to AL-MANAR that the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leadership is currently drawing up a proposal to calm the situation. The proposal includes several clauses, including a six-month truce, during which Hamas will refrain from carrying out armed operations.

The Palestinian source said that the proposal is being drawn up without fanfare and might be proposed at the end of this week to the Palestinian Authority as well as to more than one party in the region. [passage omitted]

Hamas Figure Denies Truce Offered

JN1804192595 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar [Hamas figure in Gaza Strip] has denied that the meetings under way in Gaza are aimed at reaching agreement to halt fedayeen operations against the Zionist enemy. He strongly refuted the reports carried by the media in this regard. He added that a halt to fedayeen operations has not been discussed at all.

Al-Zahhar reiterated the position of the [Hamas, Islamic Resistance] Movement toward the Oslo accord, and demanded the immediate release of all prisoners held in the 'Arafat authority jails.

Meanwhile, Hamas prisoners revealed that they had been beaten and tortured by 'Arafat's policemen and security organs. Several prisoners said that containers with noxious substances were placed next to their heads, that they were sworn at and verbally abused, and that they were beaten with rifle butts. One youth said that policemen handcuffed his hands behind his back and suspended him from the ceiling of a room in 'Arafat's police headquarters, and that more than 10 policemen severely beat him until he bled.

Three Islamic Jihad strugglers held in 'Arafat's jails continued their hunger strike, which they began a week ago.

Contacts, Talks on Hamas-PA Truce Reported

TA1904092595 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 19 Apr 95 p 4

[Report by Eli Bohadana and Amir Gilat]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Egypt has been holding secret talks with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] elements in the Gaza Strip in a bid to bring about a reconciliation with the Palestinian Authority [PA].

A secret meeting was held two days ago in Gaza with Hamas leaders Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar and Sayyid Abu-Musamih in the office of Mahmud Karin, a representative of the Egyptian Embassy. Karin told the Hamas representatives that Egypt is worried about the crisis in the Gaza Strip. Hamas officials described the talks as "positive" and said the meeting had been initiated by the Egyptian official.

Not just Egypt is trying to bring about a truce in the Gaza Strip. A delegation of Israeli Arabs has been holding mediation talks in Gaza ever since the beginning of the crisis between the Rejectionist Front and the PA.

A delegation headed by Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, leader of the Islamic Movement in Israel, and 'Arafat's adviser Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, has held meetings with representatives of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the PA. Darwish said yesterday: "We may witness a turning point in relations in the area, not just among the Palestinians themselves but also vis-a-vis Israel. I am not just talking about a reconciliation, but of something beyond that." [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 19 April publishes a front-page report by Roni Shaqed who adds: "Hamas and the PA have been working on a reconciliation agreement whereby Hamas would stop attacking Israeli targets from Gaza and Jericho and would undertake not to use the weapons in its possession against the PA. In return, the Palestinian Police would rescind its decision to disarm Hamas' murder teams, the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions."]

Islamic Jihad Warns 'Arafat of New Attacks

NC1804130595 Paris AFP in English 0932 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, April 18 (AFP)—The Islamic Jihad warned Yasir 'Arafat's self-rule authority on Tuesday [18 April] to stop arresting and jailing Moslem fundamentalists and threatened more attacks on Israel.

In an anonymous telephone call to AFP Jerusalem, a man claiming to represent Islamic Jihad said: "al-Qassam, the military wing of Islamic Jihad, warns the autonomous authority to stop arresting and trying in court our mujahidin fighters.

In its first verdicts, the authority's state security court last week sentenced three Jihad members to between 15 and 25 years for inciting suicide attacks.

Three men from the Islamic Resistance movement Hamas have since been jailed by the court.

The telephone caller went on to threaten Israel.

"We will make cruel attacks to the heart of the Israeli army and the settlers wherever they may be, even in autonomy areas, and you will hear about this operation soon," he said.

Islamic Jihad carried out a suicide bombing which killed seven Israeli soldiers and an American woman on April 9 near the settlement of Kfar Darom in the Gaza Strip.

The bombing led Gaza police to arrest 150 Islamic suspects, but about 70 have since been freed.

Islamic Jihad Leader: 'We Refuse To Hand Over Our Arms'

MM1804155595 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Apr 95 p 3

[Report by Salwa al-Ustuwani: "Secretary General of Islamic Jihad in Palestine Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: We Will Not Halt Our Military Operations, and We Refuse To Hand Over Our Arms"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Damascus—While Israel has taken tough security measures inside Israel and intensified its military measures in order to besiege the Palestinians inside the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank for fear of further Palestinian military operations against the occupation forces, Islamic Jihad Movement Secretary General Fathi al-Shaqaqi has announced that the movement will not halt its military operations against the occupation forces.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT he said that "none of the Israeli security measures will be able to prevent us from reaching our targets. Proof of this is the operation carried out by Islamic Jihad elements in Kefar Darom, in which a bus protected by the occupation soldiers was destroyed. And we entered the impossible square in the Gaza Strip, which is a very complicated area. Jihad elements were able to deal this strong blow and reach the enemy's heart in Tel Aviv—which confirms that we can reach any area and hit the enemy wherever he is." He adde: The Palestinian Authority and its measures will not be more able than the occupier himself to prevent us from continuing our struggle. He announced that the Islamic Jihad will not hand over its arms, and it will continue the resistance, since it is a legitimate right against the occupation.

Al-Shaqaqi criticized the measures taken by the Palestinian Authority and those in charge of it, holding (Palestinian President) Yasir 'Arafat fully responsible for these measures.

He said: It would be embarrassing and shameful to hand over the arms, because these arms are aimed against the enemy, not our Palestinian people, who have for 70 years been accustomed to carrying arms. And the arrests have no legal or political justification. They fall in the framework of provoking the people, hence arousing great indignation on the Palestinian scene.

Al-Shaqaqi pointed to the sentences passed against Samir al-Jiddi, a mosque teacher who, according to al-Shaqaqi, has no security or military activities and was sentenced to 15 years in prison without trial. And 'Umar al-Thalj was sentenced to life imprisonment in the same manner. The Islamic Jihad secretary general described recent developments in Gaza and the West Bank as regrettable, saying: They are fire beneath the ash. And the arrests being made have no legal justification, and the world has never experienced any similar arrests before. He also said: These measures will only make us more determined to fight, and we will continue the resistance. And we will never lay down our arms, and the coming days will witness more of this resistance. [passage omitted]

Al-Shaqaqi on Suicide Operations

JN1804160595 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 15 Apr 95 p 4

[Interview with Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement, in Damascus by Ibrahim Humaydi; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Humaydi] What was the objective of the latest Islamic Jihad operation?

[Al-Shaqaqi] We have always reiterated that military operations are carried out in the context of a constant jihad against the occupation. Such operations were carried out before the conclusion of the Oslo accord, and will continue to be carried out after the conclusion of that accord. In principle, these operations have nothing to do with the accord. Nonetheless, because this accord marked a serious turning point in the Palestinian people's history, we are required to step up our military jihad operations to thwart what we believe to be a conspiracy aimed at liquidating the Palestinian cause. The implementation of the accord will be highly detrimental to the cause and the region as a whole. That is why we are stepping up our operations. It is only natural for jihad and resistance to the occupation to continue. We have not made a secret of our opposition to the accord. Our efforts in this regard are quite clear.

[Humaydi] To what extent do these operations promote your opposition to the accord?

[Al-Shaqaqi] I believe that the accord is almost dead, thanks to the strikes dealt to its security content by the mujahidin. The negotiations have become futile. Now, they focus on promoting the enemy's security. We should not forget that the Oslo accord was an Israeli text that reflected that balance of power and Israeli dictates. Consequently, it has only one interpretation; namely, the Israeli interpretation. This was clear even before the escalation of recent military operations, particularly when Yitzhaq Rabin said that there were no sacred deadlines, opposed the dismantlement of settlements, claimed that Jerusalem would be Israel's eternal capital, opposed the repatriation of refugees, promoted the annexation of half the West Bank [as published], rejected the idea of establishing a Palestinian state, and even rejected the redeployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank. What I mean is that the recent Israeli position, as spelled out in the negotiations, was not a reaction to the operations, but rather a reflection of the Zionist strategy, which we must confront with force and jihad, because this strategy is rooted in the use of force, violence, and terrorism.

[Humaydi] Will your operations continue with the same intensity?

[Al-Shaqaqi] As long as Palestine is occupied, involvement in such operations will remain the ambition of thousands of mujahidin.

[Humaydi] How do you convince the mujahidin to carry out martyrdom operations?

[Al-Shaqaqi] We do not do that. As a matter of fact, the mujahidin themselves have to convince us of their desire to carry out such operations. The mujahidin register their names in our lists if they want to carry out such operations. And when we are late in meeting their requests, they get angry and put pressure on us to allow them to carry out martyrdom operations. However, our resources do not allow us to endorse martyrdom operations everyday. They are competing to enlist with our movement, and those who believe that there is tardiness in meeting their requests on our part get angry.

[Humaydi] How many mujahidin have registered their names in your lists of martyrdom operations?

[Al-Shaqaqi] This is not my business. Rather, it is the business of the people who plan military actions inside the territories. Nonetheless, they are thousands of Palestinians.

[Humaydi] Has a decision been made to confine military action to suicide attacks?

[Al-Shaqaqi] Not necessarily. Nonetheless, there is a popular demand for martyrdom operations, which have probably become necessary to achieve the greatest military, moral, and political impact.

[Humaydi] Have you personally ever thought of carrying out such operations?

[Al-Shaqaqi] Since I was a small child, I have been dreaming of martyrdom. However, my political and organizational status has pushed me elsewhere. When I was being tortured by the Israelis during the years of my detention, I felt that I was approaching the moment of martyrdom. I wished it then. Anyhow, I am still waiting for it.

[Humaydi] How much did the last operation cost you?

[Al-Shaqaqi] I cannot provide an answer. Any action is not done on the spur of the moment. It is the outcome of an accumulation of expertise and various tactical capabilities. This renders operations in Palestine the most costly in terms of money. It is impossible to determine the cost of a specific operation. Moreover, this is not my business. Any suicide operation requires a highly cohesive, intricate, and impregnable structure. Without this, no operations can be carried out.

[Humaydi] Where do you stand in this structure?

[Al-Shaqaqi] I am the movement's general guide. Since my expulsion from Palestine, I have been engaged in political and media work. The movement is also engaged in military jihad that is basically operating in Palestine.

[Humaydi] Was there any coordination between Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] and [Islamic] Jihad to carry out the last two operations on the same day?

[Al-Shaqaqi] I am not aware of such coordination. But, it remains to be said that thorough coordination is required.

[Humaydi] Do you believe that disarming the Palestinians would obstruct the work of Islamic Jihad?

[Al-Shaqaqi] Nobody can disarm the people who have been fighting for the past 75 years. We used our weapons to fight the British and Zionist occupiers. Hence, we will not surrender our arms. Our weapons were used by 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Husayni, Khalil al-Wazir, Misbah al-Suri, and 'Imad 'Aql. We will never surrender our weapons. If 'Arafat attempts to pursue and disarm us, then he will sink more in our blood and the blood of the Palestinian people. This will further erode his authority, and contribute to its disintegration. This is a continuous multifaceted war; and the most important thing that we need in it is willpower.

God be praised, we now feel more confident and more capable of continuing our jihad. The attempts to disarm us and pursue us will place us in a state of constant mobilization. They will promote the rationale for stepping up operations in the self-rule areas.

[Humaydi] Do you believe that the latest measures could lead to intra-Palestinian confrontations?

[Al-Shaqaqi] As a matter of fact, for the first time since the entry of the self-rule authority into Gaza, I am now more concerned than ever about the occurrence of infighting. Nonetheless, we, as well as Hamas, are determined to avoid infighting whenever possible. This is a wise decision on our part. The traditional ingredients of a civil war are not there due to the national, ethnic, religious, and sectarian homogeneity, and also due to the ties of kinship binding people. Moreover, in this regard, we cannot but give credit to the wisdom of the Islamic movement represented by Jihad and Hamas, and their refusal to allow themselves to be dragged into such a regrettable eventuality.

[Humaydi] Have you held any dialogue with the [Palestinian] Authority to avoid such an eventuality?

[Al-Shaqaqi] It is impossible to hold any political dialogue with it, not because the Islamic side is intransigent, but rather because we have a completely different agenda. It is hard for us and the authority to agree on common political denominators. We do not object to any meeting with the authority to defuse conflict on the ground.

[Humaydi] To defuse the conflict on what issues?

[Al-Shaqaqi] On issues such as the cases of detainees and the unfair sentences they have received in the absence of evidence, and on arms-bearing on the street. The reference here is to field activities that could spark off conflict. However, operations will continue as long as the occupation is maintained. The potential for carrying out various types of jihad operations will remain. Nonetheless, martyrdom operations will be the hallmark of the upcoming phase.

[Humaydi] How do you react to 'Arafat's accusations that you take orders from abroad?

[Al-Shaqaqi] This is a ridiculous accusation, because one does not need orders to resist occupation. Resistance is a sacred national and religious duty that does not need orders from external parties. When 'Arafat and some figures of the [Palestinian] Authority were engaged in acts of resistance, did they take orders from external parties? As a matter of fact, we are putting pressure on external parties to draw some support from them. The fight is targeted against the occupiers. The accusations in this regard are meant to cover up for the security alliance between the Israeli intelligence service on the one hand and the Palestinian Authority and security troops on the other. Joint security bodies have been set up at Erez checkpoint and in Istanbul, Tel Aviv, and Europe. These bodies are using a budget approved by Israeli organs to pursue Islamic movements inside and outside the territories.

[Humaydi] Do you expect an attempt on your life?

[Al-Shaqaqi] My life is in the hands of God. Moving the fight outside Palestine, the basic arena, would be one of the gravest mistakes of the Zionist movement. I believe that any Israeli official who endorses such a move would compromise his own career.

[Humaydi] Have you thought of carrying out a military operation against 'Arafat?

[Al-Shaqaqi] We do not believe in political assassination. Nonetheless, the Palestinian people's wrath is exacerbating as a result of the authority's foolish acts, corruption, heinous practices, and subservience to the enemy. If unleashed, this wrath could hit everywhere. The confrontation is not only with Jihad and Hamas; it is with the people.

Hebron Daytime Curfew Lifted; 25 Detainees Released

TA1904093495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that Hebron Mayor Mustafa al-Natshah asked the Palestinian Authority [PA] to relay a protest to the UN Security Council with regard to the punitive measures Israel has been enforcing in the city. According to al-Natshah, this collective punishment hurts 120,000 Arabs out of concern for the well-being of a few hundred Jews. [passage omitted]

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] today lifted the daytime curfew in Hebron and its environs, but the night curfew will continue.

The PA in Gaza today released 25 detainees from prison: 20 Muslim extremists who are members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad, and 5 senior activists of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine who are members of its political bureau.

A senior spokesman for the Muslim extremists in the Gaza Strip asserted this morning that no reconciliation agreement has been reached with the PA and that all the reports on the issue are unfounded.

Cabinet Stresses Continuation of 'Political Battle'

JN1504140895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 Apr 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Authority [NA] cabinet held its weekly meeting under President Yasir 'Arafat at the Presidency in Gaza today. Following the meeting, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, read the cabinet's statement. He said the cabinet listened to a detailed briefing by President 'Arafat on the overall measures taken by the NA.

The cabinet stressed the continuation of the political battle to stop both the settlement activity and the confiscation of lands, particularly in and around Jerusalem. It stressed the implementation of the phased agreement, including redeployment and the elections, as well as the confrontation of Israeli procrastination and the termination of the policy of isolation and siege which increases tension.

Sha'th said the NA and the Palestinian people are committed to the agreements signed with Israel, in all their political, economic, and security aspects. The cabinet called on all Palestinian factions to do their utmost to open a national dialogue and safeguard our people's objectives in terms of establishing a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Meanwhile, the NA will work to create an atmosphere of confidence and national fraternity based on the interest of our kinsfolk, workers, farmers and other strata of the people. The cabinet emphasized respect for, and entrenchment of, political pluralism and announced its absolute rejection of any undermining of the security of citizens. It pointed out that Palestinian security forces are the only party authorized to maintain law and order and to prevent tampering with our people's property and resources.

Dr. Sha'th said he will lead a delegation to Paris to prepare for the meetings of the donor states scheduled for 27-28 April.

In another development, large crowds of citizens gathered before the Presidency this afternoon in a march of support for President 'Arafat on the occasion of the Fatah Movement winning the seats of the Bayt Hanun Youths Club. President 'Arafat waved his hands and saluted the crowds, which raised Palestinian flags and pictures of both President 'Arafat and martyr Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

Sha'th Denounces Murder of Palestinians in Hebron

JN1704135295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, has denounced the assassination of three [Palestinian] youths by special Israeli units in an ambush in Hebron yesterday.

Sha'th Demanded a cease fire and that peace and security be achieved for both the Palestinian people and the Israelis. He also called on Israel to respect human rights and end the repressive practices against the Palestinian people.

Police Agents Suspected of Shooting Shopkeeper

NC1804130695 Paris AFP in English 1201 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nablus, West Bank, April 18 (AFP)—Three men believed to be Palestinian police agents shot and seriously wounded the owner of a sweetshop in the occupied West Bank town of Nablus on Tuesday [18 April], witnesses said.

Muhammad Taqiy-al-Din al-Masri, 51, was dragged out of his shop in the old quarter and seven bullets pumped into his legs without explanation.

Witnesses said the three gunmen were known to be part of Colonel Jibril Rajub's preventive security force which roams across the West Bank from the autonomous enclave of Jericho.

However Rajub told AFP: "They are not members of my service. They are hooligans."

Militants of a former armed group linked to PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat shot another Nablus man in the legs three weeks ago, again without any known motive.

The Israeli army arrested one suspect.

PLO Hopes To Conclude Election Talks With Israel

NC1804130795 Paris AFP in English 1232 GMT 18 April 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jericho, West Bank, April 18 (AFP)—The PLO hopes to be in a position to reach an accord with Israel in Cairo next week to hold the first Palestinian elections, chief negotiator Sa'ib 'Urayqat said Tuesday [18 April].

The two sides will a new round of talks in Egypt next Tuesday and Wednesday, the Palestinian local government minister told AFP.

"We hope to almost finish the talks on elections during this session," he said.

That would leave the questions of transfer of power and the size and scope of an autonomy assembly to settle, as well as the redeployment of Israeli forces outside Palestinian towns.

But 'Urayqat underlined that no separate agreement would be signed on the elections.

A new agreement will cover all the above aspects to complete the second phase of autonomy as under the 1993 Declaration of Principles for autonomy, he said.

Under the declaration, Israel was to redeploy on the West Bank by the eve of elections scheduled for last July 13, but Israel has baulked at any pull-back until the security climate improves.

'Arafat Congratulates al-Asad on National Day

JN1804184695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat has sent a congratulatory cable to President Hafiz al-Asad on the occasion of the national day of the Syrian Arab Republic in which he conveyed the sincerest congratulations in the name of the Palestinian people, the PLO Executive Committee, the Palestinian National Authority, and in his excellency's own name.

The president said in his cable: On an occasion that is dear to us, we highly appreciate the great sacrifices offered by our Arab people in Syria in order to attain their national independence.

He spoke about the strong brotherly relations of struggle and the joint destiny of the two brotherly peoples to confront the challenges and quick changes, and to liberate all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories in Palestine, the Golan, and south Lebanon.

He added: We hope to restore solidarity and joint Arab action in service of national objectives and to realize our nation's aspirations of national sovereignty, economic progress, and social welfare.

In his cable to President al-Asad, President 'Arafat said the National Authority—supported by of the sisterly and friendly states and the peace and freedom-loving forces—continues its efforts to implement all articles of the Declaration of Principles in letter and spirit, and establish just and lasting peace in a manner that ensures ending the Israeli occupation of our land and shrines, and restoring the national inalienable and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, led by their right to self-determination and independent state whose capital is holy Jerusalem.

[Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic in its 1515 newscast reported that President al-Asad received a congratulatory cable from PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat without giving further details of the cable.]

Tunisia's Mustapha Holds Talks With 'Arafat

LD1804225295 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Said Ben Mustapha, secretary of state for Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] affairs and the envoy of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, was today received by President 'Arafat in the town of Gaza.

The Palestinian president praised the initiative of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who was always the first to stand alongside the Palestinian people and their leadership, and recalled the support, hospitality, and facilities for the Palestinian leadership which Tunisia has given the Palestinian revolution in its earliest stages.

On arriving in Gaza, Said Ben Mustafa made a statement to the Palestinian media in which he expressed his pride in carrying out this mission with which President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali entrusted him to his brother President Yasir 'Arafat, which consisted of conveying to him and the Palestinian Nationality Authority that [Tunisia's] support and assistance for its Palestinian brothers will continue.

Representative Presents Credentials

JN1904123295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1100 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat has received (Mohamed El Ajnaf), the Tunisian Government's representative to the National Authority, who presented his credentials to President 'Arafat.

Gulf Investors Said Negotiating To Buy Settlements

TA1804181495 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 17 Apr 95 p 2

[Report by Mahmud Abu-Khudayr and Zaki Abu-al-Halawah]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jerusalem—Informed Palestinian sources have disclosed that for some time now Israeli personalities have been holding meetings in many European capitals—the latest of which was in Rome—with Palestinians and investors from several Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar, to discuss the latter's purchase of several settlements designated for evacuation in accordance with the peace process.

The sources said that among these settlements are Netzarim and Kfar Darom in the Gaza Strip and Ari'el, which is located near Nabulus.

It has been learned that the donor states prefer to conclude deals to buy these settlements and hand them over to a broad sector of residents of the refugee camps, police personnel, and employees of the Palestinian Authority, instead of establishing new housing complexes for Palestinians and burdening them with long-term loans and heavy interest.

These talks seek to accelerate the purchase of empty settlements in comprehensive deals, as well as apartments from settlers wishing to sell them, especially in the Gaza Strip and in settlements spread out in most of the Palestinian territories, bearing in mind that a large number of those settlements are empty.

The sources explained that the Israeli Government intends to benefit from the existing settlements and will not destroy them like the Yamit settlement in the wake of the signing of the Camp David accords with Egypt.

These sources said that in the next few weeks a number of experts and appraisers are expected to visit some of the settlements that are designated to be sold to evaluate their price. It is believed that the appraisers will be of European and other nationalities. [passage omitted]

Minister on Donor Countries' Meeting, Projects

NC1804183495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 18 Apr (MENA)—The donor countries will meet in Paris at the end of April to discuss the aid given to the Palestinians in the self-rule areas.

This was stated today by Ahmad Quray', Abu-'Ala', economy minister in the Palestinian National Authority.

In a statement to MENA, he said: We have so far received $215 million out of $800 million that the donor countries pledged last year to give to the Palestinian Authority [PA], including $124 million as the PA's administrative expenses and around $90 million for projects to repair the infrastructure.

Stressing the importance of relying on the Palestinian people and private sector, he said: A Palestinian company with a $200 million capital has been established. Another company is now being established with a $100 million capital and discussions are underway to establish a development bank with $250 million capital in which a group of Gulf businessmen will participate. He noted the importance of the Arab countries' role in this field of action.

He also noted that the Arab Contractors Company is undertaking a number of projects in the Gaza Strip in addition to a number of Egyptian banks and insurance companies that have opened branches in the self-rule areas.

The Palestinian minister said that, as an Arab League member, his country is bound by all the agreements concluded by the Arab countries despite the restrictions on it imposed by the nature of the agreement with Israel. He stressed that Israel has only one choice, namely to reformulate its position toward the Palestinians on the basis of equal treatment and to drop hegemony and control forever.

Algeria

President To Meet With Libya's al-Qadhdhafi

LD1904131195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Bilateral relations between Algeria and fraternal Libya are to be strengthened again during the summit that will bring together today and tomorrow President Liamine Zeroual and Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in I-N-Amenas.

More details from Moukhtar Mahir in I-N-Amenas:

[Mahir] On the agenda of this summit, which will give a new boost to bilateral cooperation, are a number of issues for discussion that have not yet been revealed. But some sources here expect that in addition to bilateral relations, the summit will discuss other points which will be touched on during the political talks between the leaders of the two countries, including the course of the AMU—of which Algeria is the current president, the situation at the level of the Mediterranean coastal states, and the relations of Maghreban and Arab Mediterranean countries with the European states, in addition to the situation in the Arab and Islamic world. [passage omitted]

The summit between President Liamine Zeroual and Co.l Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has not yet started. President Zeroual is expected to arrive at the head of a high-level ministerial delegation at midday today. Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and the ministerial delegation accompanying him are expected to arrive this afternoon.

The Algerian-Libyan political talks are due to begin this evening with the holding of the first talks between the leaders of the two countries that will later be widened to include the members of the Algerian and Libyan delegations.

President on Dialogue Over 'Second Course'

LD1804222395 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] As is known, the consultative meetings which the state president held with 15 parties and organizations have ended. These meetings, the focus of which was the presidential elections and related political aspects, highlighted three courses with regard to the elections, about which the official spokesman for the state presidency spoke in his meeting with the national press yesterday. During our bulletin yesterday, you heard a first statement which comprised the details of the talks which the state president held with the parties and organizations supporting the presidential elections.

In continuation of the policy of transparency and the presidency's commitment to informing public opinion about events and the details of the meetings, and as the official spokesman for the state presidency promised, the state presidency today issued another statement comprising details of the second course which parties and organizations called for, and which proposes another course to get out of the crisis.

A summary of this course is now given by my colleague Zahia Ben Arous:

[Ben Arous] Good evening. Yes, Sabria. The state president informed all the sides in the group which proposed another course to get out of the crisis that the decision to hold the presidential elections was the result of the handicaps which impeded the course of the dialogue begun last year. In the areas it covered, this dialogue included the issue of a return to the elections. The state president recalled these parties' call for presidential elections and reminded one of them of the request it had made to the Higher State Council to extend the period of the council for six months during which presidential elections would be organized.

First, with regard to the relationship between the elections and the course of the dialogue, the state president stressed that this course was necessary to reach a political solution to the crisis. Regarding the form of the dialogue, the state president recalled the efforts made to make the officials of the dissolved party [Islamic Salvation Front] to begin constructive action to pave the way to participation in the dialogue in order to reach a comprehensive solution to the crisis. The opportunity granted to the political stratum—but which it did not use—to contact officials of the dissolved party so that they could take a clear stance on violence illustrated the sincerity of these efforts.

It is known that this opportunity was granted to political parties and figures since March and was renewed on the sidelines of the dialogue last August and September.

Here the state president put it on record that instead of encouraging those who might support and work toward halting the violence inside the dissolved party, some people chose to support and commend rigid and radical stances, which within this context went to the extent of demanding consultation with those directly responsible for the assassination of citizens.

In his reply to the parties which propose another course to get out of the crisis, the state president pointed out that what was at stake was not saving the regime or the authorities. What was really at stake, on the basis of a realistic vision, was the protection of Algeria by searching for the most appropriate and least harmful means of overcoming the crisis.

Alongside his affirmation of the decision that presidential elections will be held before the end of the year, the state president expressed his happiness with the efforts made in Algeria to promote dialogue. Concerning violence as a tragic reality experienced by our country, the state president stressed that this issue was the subject of a thorough debate, but despite this, differences of viewpoints remained. He added that the approach of these parties to the issue of violence indicated that there was an alternative between dialogue and the fight against terrorism. This does not truly reflect the line of the state based on eagerness to protect the citizens and property, and to seek to tackle the roots of the crisis politically. While rejecting the way you have dealt with the question of violence [during the latest round of dialogue], the state president said: I want to recall some facts. When I urged the political parties to call for an end to violence, some parties replied that violence would not stop just by a call for it to end. Those who hold this position bear responsibility for it, because the aim of violence is destruction and the target is the Algerian people. And when I sought to make the political parties work constructively for an end to violence, the state president added, some of these parties hastily suggested measures supposedly meant to calm the situation. I have affirmed to these parties, President Zeroual went on, that the state is more eager than anyone to safeguard the lives of all Algerians, and that it has taken the initiative of introducing calming measures, and it will take similar measures whenever possible.

In this context, the state president noted that the compassionate measures [to forgive repentant rebels] which emanated from our values have failed to bring about any positive response on the part of these parties which call for calming measures. There are other facts, President Zeroual added: concerning the existence of abuses, I urged these same parties to put forward all proofs in their hands, but I have received nothing. For its part, the state has furnished tangible evidence of its determination to fight terrorism in the light of respect of the law, and, in order to prove the transparent nature of our action, we say that Algeria's doors are wide open before the competent international organizations dealing with human rights.

From this premise, the state president called for an end to brandishing the issue of human rights for political propaganda purposes, and, concluding his recollection of these facts, he was keen to stress the sufferings of the Algerian people from blind violence, and its clear position on its right that the state should defend and protect it. This position of the people shows a growing awareness, and President Zeroual wished he could find an echo of this awareness among the political class, and wished also that this awareness could reach those who bear the historic responsibility for the emergence of violence in Algeria. Regarding the claims that the activities of the political parties are being obstructed, the statement of the presidency says: Wide pluralism marks the information scene. The officials of the political parties have not been denied the freedom of expression or movement. Algeria is the state of the rule of law, as the state president continually recalls regarding the question of relations between the political parties and the interests of the state. The state of the rule of law is the state where parties abide by the law, and benefit from the protection this law provides. Concerning the position of the state president toward the Rome meeting, and at the insisting request of two parties taking part in the meeting in question [the latest round of dialogue], President Zeroual recalled the fact that some parties were opposed to the framework and the constants governing the national dialogue held on 20 September last, and which ended without arriving at an agreement on a press statement as a result of differences over the framework and the constants to which the state remained loyal. Thus, President Zeroual rejects all attempts of foreign interference in national affairs, and this is a position to which the Algerian people adheres.

The state president also recalled his personal encouragement, since the preliminary meetings of the dialogue in March last year, for the parties and the national public figures to promote national dialogue and work toward bringing viewpoints closer to one another to secure a national solution to the crisis. Still with President Zeroual's reply to the demand made by the two political parties in question to clarify his position to the Rome meeting, he affirmed the position of the state rejecting the transferring of debates on the Algerian crisis abroad in collusion with foreign forces and public figures. This is a position of principle and not a position dictated by circumstances, a position that was clearly expressed when the state said that it rejected the confusion and the tendentious criticism that emanated from the Rome meeting.

The state president informed the political partners that the dialogue which was held in Algeria was not an artificial dialogue as some people claimed. The state president said this dialogue has made me propose with all sincerity a joint course for getting out of the crisis, managing the transitional period, and agreeing on elections.

At the end of the state president's meeting with all the sides of the group which proposes another course for getting out of the crisis, he summarized his position in the following points:

First, the presidential elections will be held, with the help of God, as scheduled before the end of the year, and the state will work to provide all the necessary conditions to ensure that the presidential elections are free and transparent. The organization and success of these elections are considered to be the beginning of the return of constitutional legitimacy to the institutions of state, and to subsequently open up the way for local and legislative elections so as to resolve the crisis of legitimacy once and for all.

Second, the solution of the crisis which has political roots through political dialogue is something which is contained in the platform of national consensus, which I am committed, as the state president said, to implement. I reiterate my readiness to discuss every proposal aimed at solving the crisis.

Third, the state will continue with complete determination to combat this terrorism which is directed against the Algerian people and their property. This will be through clear principles which are: the state's determination to shoulder its responsibility toward the citizens; the desire to spare the blood of all Algerians; scrupulous respect for the law and the right of citizens; and resistance to all transgressions.

Fourth, Algeria will not remain in a state of crisis, political stalemate and institutional instability. Democracy will return to the people.

Fifth, the political stratum must incorporate the factor of trust in its course, because the absence of this factor is one of the reasons for the tragedy which our country is experiencing.

The state president concluded by saying that we must all search for solutions to our problems if we want to entrench our future, independence, and sovereignty, and the freedom of our people and homeland.

Egypt

Two Libyan Pilgrim Flights Denied Passage

NC1804155495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1412 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 18 Apr (MENA)—Sulayman Mutawalli, minister of transport, communications, and civil aviation, has stated that Egypt is prepared to facilitate the transport of Libyan pilgrims by plane to Saudi Arabia.

Speaking at Cairo airport, where he went to receive some Arab transport ministers who will participate in the meeting of the executive bureau of the Arab transport ministers in Cairo on Thursday, he said: We are taking measures to secure the planes in Egyptian airspace if approval is received. He added that after the measures are taken, the concerned quarters will be notified.

Meanwhile, an authoritative source in the Civil Aviation Authority has stated that this morning it received a request from Libyan civil aviation to permit the passage of two planes carrying Libyan pilgrims. However, the authority informed the Libyan authorities that it could not approve the passage of these planes until high-level contacts currently under way to exclude these trips from the embargo imposed against Libya are concluded.

At the same time, director of the Libyan Airlines office in Cairo airport said all employees have been put on standby to give all facilities to the planes carrying Libyan pilgrims on their arrival in Cairo in the event approval for these flights is received.

An authoritative source at EgyptAir said the company is prepared to send planes to Libya to transport the pilgrims in the event approval from the United Nations is received.

A total of 52 Libyan pilgrims who arrived overland from Libya left Cairo airport for Saudi Arabia today.

Labor Party: 'No Justification' To Oppose Request

NC1804102695 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 14 Apr 95 pp 1, 6

[FBIS Translated Text] The Labor Party has issued a statement responding to Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's declaration to let Libyan pilgrims travel by air to perform this year's hajj, defying the embargo imposed on Libya. The statement says: The Labor Party followed the recent remarks of the Libyan revolution leader and his call to Saudi Arabia and neighboring Arab states to allow Libyan pilgrims' flights through their airspace.

The party had earlier declared its opposition to the sanctions illegally and illegitimately imposed on the Libyan people. It called for turning down the Western demands for sanctions against Libya, including the air embargo. The party expressed its belief that the United States and the West, particularly Britain and France, used the explosion of the U.S. airliner over Lockerbie as an excuse to retaliate against the Libyan leadership. It noted that the purpose of resolutions was not to interrogate the defendants to find the truth, but rather to humiliate the Libyan people and their national leadership for its failure to comply with foreign will, as well as their determination to hold on to their rights.

The party has observed that the Libyan leadership has sought to avoid a direct clash with intransigent Western leaders, putting forward several suggestions to ensure that the defendants will be interrogated and given a fair trial, even in accordance with Scottish laws. This was turned down by U.S. and British leadership without giving a convincing justification, although the position of the Libyan leadership was based on international law and the Libyan Constitution.

In view of the above, the Labor Party believes that the Libyan pilgrims are entitled to perform their rituals with the least possible effort by flying their own planes from the Jamahiriyah to the house of God, without having to submit to any additional hardships.

The party sees no justification for other states' opposing this demand. If the purpose of sanctions is to deprive Libya of economic profit through using its planes, the travel of pilgrims accrues no economic gains for Libya. It only guarantees the pilgrims their right to perform the hajj without trouble and with the least possible effort, particularly since some of them are old and cannot withstand the effort involved in other forms of travel.

The party believes it is high time for Western states to review their position on the sanctions imposed on Libya and to abandon that approach which lacks all justification, since there are suspicions involving states other than Libya. This means that the sanctions lack legal foundation and that they are purely political a issue.

The party seizes this opportunity to call on Arab states to use their own means to lift the blockade if the United States and Britain refuse to respond to the just Libyan demand.

Daily Backs Libyan Request for Pilgrim Flights

NC1804094495 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 14 Apr 95 p 12

[Article from the "Candid Word" column by Mahmud Bakri: "Break the Siege"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's decision to organize flights for pilgrims has thrilled the hearts of all the sons of the Islamic nation and have given rise to dispositions that were almost lost in the falsehood, degeneration, and decline that overtook some Arab rulers.

Here is a proud Arab people bravely defying U.S. vanity in a proud and honorable stand. How hard it is for an Arab ruler to say no to the United States, which wants to crown itself the master of this age and the leader of international hooliganism. But al-Qadhdhafi gave his word and our brother Libyan pilgrims have prepared themselves to head for the house of God by air, breaking the wall of fear the United States and its associates and midgets erected under the name of "the unfair blockade."

Knowing the United States' perfidious ways, it is not unlikely that the planes of the Libyan pilgrims will be subjected to a cowardly act of trickery. This is not uncommon for the United States and those running in its orbit. It is not unlikely for the United States to launch a barbaric and idiotic aggression against the Libyan territories. They have committed such cheap acts against Col. al-Qadhdhafi and the proud people of al-Jamahiriyah before.

Should this happen—God forbid—I expect it to be the first step in Disposing of the U.S. nightmare that has weighed heavily on the chest of the nation for so long and has almost suppressed its dreams and frustrated its ambitions. Revolution will certainly break out throughout the nation and every Arab and Muslim will harbor a justified vendetta against the United States, its interests, and agents. Sentiments will be fired up to demand a response to the unfair aggression. Hence the revolution will set out to purge the nation of the filth of the United States and those who run in their orbit.

The hearts and arms of all the loyal sons of this nation are with the Libyan pilgrims. It will not be unusual if calls come from here and there and if thousands volunteer to join the pilgrims on their trip "paved with danger." Al-Qadhdhafi's call has ignited sentiments and put the nation in a just showdown in which the unfair blockade imposed on Libya and all the sons of the nation must be broken.

Victory in that daring showdown—if it happens—will be ours, God willing. The fiery spirit of jihad is still glowing in the hearts of all the loyal people. The crushing blows the heroes of Gaza dealt to the enemy forces are the best evidence to that.

Israeli Health Minister Meets Mubarak, Comments

NC1804124895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1145 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Apr (MENA)—Israeli Health Minister Dr. Efrayim Sne, who met President Husni Mubarak this morning, has stated that the aim of his visit to Egypt is to lay the foundations for bilateral health cooperation.

He said: I have had the honor of meeting President Mubarak.

He expressed satisfaction that President Mubarak has approved the joint Egyptian-Israeli efforts to begin health cooperation between the two sides, noting that there is much expertise to be exchanged and there are many subjects to be discussed.

Asked if, during the meeting, he discussed political issues such as peace developments, the Israeli minister replied: Of course. We discussed the current status of the peace process. President Mubarak voiced some concern about the current situation and noted the need to achieve progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

Sne said he shares President Mubarak's opinion on this. Egyptian Health Minister 'Ali 'Abd-al-Fattah said that during his meeting with Sne, they discussed Egyptian-Israeli health cooperation and the prospects for exchanging expertise in various medical spheres. [passage omitted]

Al-Baz Views NPT, Criticizes Anti-Israeli Moves

TA1804153595 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 17 Apr 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Usamah al-Baz, director of the Egyptian president's office, has said that all factions and currents of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are duty bound to stop conducting operations that they know very well will lead to increasing the security burden on the Palestinian Authority [PA] and prevent the citizens from improving their living conditions. He said that the PA has the right to maintain law and order, adding that it is inconceivable for such operations to continue in a stage that is witnessing the occupation's departure and elimination.

Dr. Usamah al-Baz made these statements in an interview with AL-MANAR at his office in Cairo. In this interview, al-Baz stressed the importance of the Arab rank's rapprochement and unity. He added that Arab rapprochement does not necessarily mean a threat to the interests of the United States and the West.

In his meeting with AL-MANAR's editor-in-chief, Dr. al-Baz said that Egypt is demanding that all the world be freed from weapons of mass destruction. He added: "When we ask Israel to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] we do not desire to embarrass it or undermine its government, but enhance security and stability in the region." He proposed that this issue be resolved through cooperation and negotiations with Israel.

Dr. al-Baz warned of the danger for the peace process stemming from foot-dragging in implementing the Oslo accord. He emphasized that Israel's continued adoption of measures to Judaize Jerusalem complicates the Jerusalem issue. Al-Baz called for cooperation and understanding between Palestine and Jordan without sensitivity. He emphasized that differences between them, if they do exist, should be raised frankly and candidly at the negotiating table. The director of the Egyptian president's office stressed the importance of Syria's role and of reaching a settlement on the Syrian track.

Al-Baz noted that there is no dispute between the United States and Egypt. He called on Israel to engage in negotiations over the NPT. He said: "We are not seeking to embarrass Israel or undermine its government when we ask it to abandon its nuclear program, rather our aim is to enhance security and stability. There are no longer cordon states around Israel, nor is it any longer in a sea of Arab hostility."

Effectiveness of UN Nuclear Assurances Questioned

NC1504204995 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 12 Apr 95 p 9

[Editorial: "Nonproliferation and the Assurances Problem"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an important step to assure nonnuclear states, the Security Council's five permanent member states, all nuclear states, declared in early April that they will not launch nuclear attacks against nonnuclear countries who subscribe to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] and that they will provide immediate assistance to any such country that is attacked or threatened by a nuclear state.

This proposal was obviously an attempt to secure the needed support for the indefinite extension of the NPT. It is supposed to be issued within a Security Council resolution. However, the proposal has not met the favorable reaction the five big powers expected from the Third World countries. Some of those countries, notably Egypt, have described it as shallow and lacking in binding force and said that substantive amendments to the text of the proposal are needed.

Indications are that the five big nuclear world powers, trying to ensure approval of an indefinite extension of the NPT, are now in the business of offering the needed guarantees to Third World countries, both in regard to protection from nuclear threats and to provision of nuclear technology. But the central problem here is that no assurances offered by the big powers will be very suitable because they will not be accompanied by political will on the part of those powers to offer nuclear technology or protection to Third World countries. This means that a big gap will remain between the assurances and reality, exactly as in the case of the practical implementation of the NPT itself. The pact, in fact, turned into a mere tool in the hands of the big nuclear powers to ensure a continued monopoly on nuclear technology and nuclear weapons.

The most important aspect of this situation as it pertains to the Middle East is that reluctance to pressure the regional nuclear states in the Third World, especially Israel, may continue. Israel is considered an absolute and unrestricted ally of the Western forces that currently dominate the world order. It does not seem likely that those forces will apply strong pressure on Israel to get rid of its nuclear weapons. This may mean that the main characteristics of the current state of the world order concerning nuclear nonproliferation will remain as they are, and that the aforementioned faults and gaps in this order will continue without major change.

Columnist Mocks 'Lopsided' U.S. Logic on NPT

NC1404183395 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 11 Apr 95 p 2

[Column by Ahmad Bahjat: "The Nuclear Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel launched the Ofeq-3 satellite a few days ago. This was not Israel's first satellite but its method of announcing it was different this time. Previously, Israel would launch a satellite and consider the act to be a military secret. This time, Israel changed its method and allowed the local press to elaborate on the occurrence, unlike its customary military tradition. This behavior was significant and so was the timing of launching the satellite. Israel launched the satellite as the talks over extending the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] opened, with the concomitant furor resulting from refusal to sign it. This also coincided with a mounting U.S. campaign to convince the countries of the world to sign it.

It should be recalled that the new Israeli satellite, which orbits the Arab world and certain countries of the Islamic World, is a monitoring device covering the Arab region as well as Pakistan and Iran.

The launching of the satellite was preceded by an intensive campaign. The U.S. secretary of defense bore part of the onus of this campaign. The goal of his tour was to intimidate the Arab world about the possibilities of

Iran's and Pakistan's possession of neclear bombs, possibilities that experts figure may occur in 10 years. It is ludicrous that we should be warned about an Islamic state's possession of a nuclear bomb after 10 years at the same time that we must rest quite assured about Israel's possession of a nuclear arsenal estimated by experts at 200 nuclear bombs. That is, the danger that we must be aware of and be prepared for is Iran and Pakistan; whereas Israel is like our father and mother whom we do not have to fear or expect danger from. This is the lopsided logic that we are expected to believe.

The U.S. campaign reached its height when the United States warned Russia against dealing with Iran or building nuclear plants there and threatened to cancel its nuclear cooperation, which would result in a loss of $100 million for Russia. The U.S. assistant secretary of state currently visiting Russia warned against cooperation with Iran or increasing its nuclear expertise. This means that the theater is being prepared for overwhelming Israeli domination. The Israeli paper MA'ARIV wrote that the discrepancy between Israel and its neighbors should be measured by light years.

Daily Calls Country's NPT Stand 'Clear, Frank'

NC1504070195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 15 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 15 Apr (MENA)—AL-AHRAM stresses in its editorial today that Egypt's stand on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] is based on clear and frank principles whose main criterion is the provision of stronger guarantees for the permanent and just peace agreement, not only in the region but also for the whole world.

It says that it is no secret that excluding Israel from an international inspection of its nuclear weapons program conflicts with the intention to establish peace in the region.

It adds that Egypt opposes the indefinite extension NPT if all the countries of the region do not join it, including Israel, which has to make a clear commitment to join it within an acceptable period of time which starts with the signing of the Middle East peace agreements. It stresses that Egypt has the right to voice its opinion and declare its stand on the NPT loudly due to its leading and pivotal role in the peace process. It says: Egypt's viewpoint is addressed to the major nuclear powers as well as to all countries. Without asking for the support of any country, group of countries, or any organization, the response of most countries' response to Egypt's view and stand was spontaneous. It adds that the European forces opposed to nuclear armament have supported the Egyptian stand and this underlines the credibility of this declared stand as a principled one that enjoys spontaneous support from the Nonaligned Movement and from influential voices inside Europe itself.

Israel Warned Not To 'Miscalculate' Country's Stance

NC1504204795 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 12 Apr 95 p 4

[Editorial: "Rabin and Peres Prefer To Return to the Past"]

[FBIS Translated Text] What has been happening to the Israeli leaders these days? They have lost their tempers and control over their tongues; they forgot everything related to peace, about which they have talked much and for which they have done little; and it seems they forgot all the developments since the 10 Ramadan [6 October 1973] battle, which, having destroyed the myth of the invincible Israeli soldier, threw them off balance and shook their confidence in themselves and the confidence of the entire world in them!

Recently, we have heard Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and his Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres uttering statements and expressions which we had believed—and some belief is sinful—had been buried under the sands of Sinai. The statements showed that those leaders are still living in the past. Peres, for example, said that no one in Israel is prepared to agree to return to the borders that existed before the 5 June 1967 war. Rabin, for his part, claimed that Syria is making impossible demands for the resumption of military talks with Israel. By these impossible demands he no doubt means the return of the occupied Golan heights and the removal of the Jewish settlements there. By considering these impossible demands, Rabin is rejecting peace, which everybody knows will be impossible without the return of the Golan to its rightful owners pursuant to Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which provide for the exchange of land for peace.

If we add this setback to Rabin's position on peace to the Israeli prime minister's foolish threat last month that he is ready to launch a war against Egypt, we realize the amount of confusion and nervousness that prompts the Israeli leaders to adopt a Samson-like attitude, a case that requires swift psychiatric treatment before it leads those leaders to miscalculate Egypt's position. For then, the unexpected might take place.

Minister: 'Terrorism' Abating, Human Rights Upheld

NC1804195195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1925 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Apr (MENA)—Justice Minister Faruq Sayf-al-Nasr said that Egypt will present a working paper to the 9th UN Conference on Crime Prevention and Treatment of Criminals, which will be held in Cairo between 29 April and 8 May. He added that the Egyptian working paper makes two proposals, the first on combating terrorism and its link with organized crime and the second demands the establishment of a regional training center for crime and social justice research for the Mediterranean Sea basin countries that will have its headquarters in Cairo.

This came at a press conference held today by the minister, who will chair the conference. It was attended by Hasan al-Alfi, interior minister and head of the Egyptian delegation to the conference, and Tourism Minister Mamdul al-Biltaji. [passage omitted]

Hasan al-Alfi said that Egypt is one of the safest and most stable countries in the world and has the lowest crime rate, according to international statistics. He stressed that figures do not lie.

The interior minister also stressed that terrorism in Egypt is abating and said that what is happening now are some individual cases and that there is full security control.

He added that Egypt will offer the conference its experience in eliminating and encircling terrorism while upholding human rights like any civilized country. He said that Egypt cares about upholding human rights. He noted that the human rights issue leads the curricula taught to the Police College students. He said that the Egyptian Constitution stipulates that criminal litigation in torture cases cannot be dropped after a set period of time so that they remain like an unsheathed sword over those practicing torture. [passage omitted]

Awqaf Minister: 'Terrorism' Has No Future in Country

NC1804140895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Mansurah, 18 Apr (MENA)—Minister of Awqaf Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub has asserted that there is no future for terrorism and extremism in Egypt, no matter what. He indicated that the violent and criminal acts have no connection with religion, ethics, and humanity, adding that the terrorist groups are responsible for the blood of innocent citizens who are killed in acts of violence.

This was contained in a speech that he delivered before scholars and preachers in al-Mansurah in the al-Daqahliyah Governorate today.

Police Kill 3 'Terrorists' in Kawm Umbu, Aswan

NC1804170695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1620 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 18 Apr (MENA)—Police shot dead three terrorists in Kawm Umbu near Aswan in Upper Egypt today. An Interior Ministry source said the State Security Intelligence Department received information that the terrorists were hiding in sugarcane fields in Kawm Umbu. Police stormed the hideout after ascertaining that the terrorists were inside it.

The source said the terrorists opened fire on police, who returned fire. The exchange of fire resulted in the death of terrorist Sabri Ahmad Yusuf Muhammad, born in Alexandria and a student at the College of Engineering of Asyut University, and terrorist Mustafa Murtada Mustafa, born in Aswan and a student at the Islamic Studies College in Qina. Attempts are being made to indentify the third dead terrorist.

The source said the two terrorists played a prominent role in smuggling weapons and explosives through mountain paths from Sudan into Egypt. They sent these weapons and explosives to terrorist groups in Upper Egypt and the Central District to implement their criminal plans.

The source said the terrorists participated in planning and carrying out a number of terrorist incidents and they were wanted in a number of cases, including the assassination of Brig. Gen. Mamduh 'Uthman and the assassination of assistant police officer Yasir 'Arafat [name as received] in Aswan. He added that the terrorists were also wanted for killing soldiers who were guarding the Brotherhood Church in Aswan and for killing an undercover agent in Idfu.

The source explained that an automatic rifle, a Belgian pistol, rounds of ammunition, a hand grenade, and leaflets were found in the hideout.

IMF Refuses Request To Resume Talks on Reform

NC1704195695 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 13 Apr 95 p 1

[Report by Jamal Shawqi]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-WAFD has learned that Egypt's contacts over the past weeks have failed to persuade the big powers to pressure the IMF to accept the reform plan the government submitted nine months ago.

The big powers were adamant that the government should take strong, effective, and quick measures to liberalize the banking and foreign trade sectors and to act on privatization to stimulate the economy and enable the government to repay its rescheduled debts. The debts total approximately $30 billion, not counting $4 billion in debts which were dropped.

The IMF experts are still refusing the government's request to resume negotiations over the reform program. The experts set the condition that they be informed of the state's next budget plan in order to make sure that the plan includes real reform measures.

In the next few days the government will hold fresh contacts with the IMF in an attempt to fix a new date for the resumption of the talks, which halted about five months ago.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Backs 'Holy Struggle' of Kurds

LD1804220195 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The brother leader [Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] has given a statement to the international RDF television agency [television production company based in Fulham, London] in which he dealt with the issue of the Kurdish people, and the current actions against them. [passage omitted]

[Begin al-Qadhdhafi recording, in English] I have to say something about the current actions which are going against the Kurdish people. I want to emphasize again my attitude for this, about this cause of the Kurdish nation. This nation has the right to be independent nation, and to have their territories, like any the other nation in the Middle East, or any nation in the world. I am against all these actions against Kurdish [people] from Arabs, or [from the] Turkish [side], or Iran, or any other country against them.

I consider the cause of the Kurdish [a] holy cause, like the Palestinian cause, and it is nation like Arab nation, like Turkish nation, like Belgian nation. And, in the end they will succeed to get their independence, and their future, so long they struggle. And, the world nations in the world must support the struggle of Kurdish people.

Only, it is not true to, it is not just to look to this struggle as a terrorist action. The nation that wants to be independent, its struggle is a sacred struggle, holy struggle. It is not terrorism at all.

I think all these actions against them will fail. It is a temporary action. All the nations in the area have no right to press this nation, and the Kurdish nation is our sister, for Arabs, or Turkish nation, for Persian nation. And, it is Kurdistan. They have a land, and they have their own nationalism, and they have the right to be independent like other nations. [In] this area, all the world know Kurdistan. Kurdistan is not Arabic, is not Turkish, not Persian, [it] is Kurdistan. Kurdistan [is] for the Kurdish nation; from the north, their borders from the north is Armenia, the south Iran, the east Iran, the west Turkey. But, the eastern nations exploited this struggle. They play with this cause, this nation, not because they support the struggle of Kurdish [people], but for their interests, their eastern interests, the western, western interest. When they have something in Iraq, they support Kurdish people. When they are with Iraq, they do not support this people. When they are, [when] they want to bring Turkey with them, they support Turkey against Kurdish [people], and so on.

I do not consider America, or Britain, or France, or any other Western nation, I do not consider [stammers] it, I do not these nations to support this struggle. The West struggles for its interests. Sometimes, they sacrifices by the cause of the Kurdish, as they did in the past with any other nations. And, the main political movement Kurdish [word indistinct], they must be united, the Labor Party, and what they call it, the Democratic Kurdish Movement, and the national Kurdish movement, or the national party, something like this, Jalal al-Talabani, Mas'ud al-Barzani, and the Labor Party. They must be united together, and struggle together for the sake of their nation, for the independence of their nation. If their leaders now they cannot be united, they may move with others who can unify this parties to be one movement from the independence of the [Kurdish nation].

I am sorry to hear this action [words indistinct] against [the] Turkish, although Tansu [Ciller—Turkish prime minister] is my sister, and I respect her, and the Turkish are a sister nation, but I support the national struggle for any nation in the world, among them this nation, [the] Kurdish nation, that [is] what I want to say, and the United Nation must carry its responsibility, and bear its responsibility for this nation, to support the independence of the Kurdish nation, and to stop all this actions against them, and do not allow [the] West to play with the holy cause of Kurdish. It is gone now. What [words indistinct] I want to say is, it is wrong now for this cause. [end recording]

Sudan

Rebel Factions To Discuss Peace, Federal System

EA1704210495 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Seventeen leaders of [John] Garang faction of Sudan People's Liberation Army rebel movement, have returned to the fold of the homeland after negotiations held with them in Nairobi by Mr. Lino Rol Deng, secretary general of the Higher Peace Council.

The returnees stressed that they had returned having been persuaded of the revolution's earnestness regarding the entrenchment of an overall fair and durable peace in the country. They said that the rebel movement had become a puppet operated by colonialist forces hostile to Sudan who do not wish its people to achieve stability and development.

In a statement to AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH newspaper published today, Mr. Lino Rol Deng said that he had held intensive contacts with the other rebel factions, i.e., the Riak Machar faction and the Equatorial wing. He said that during these contacts a plan acceptable to the two sides had been laid down for an agenda for negotiations going beyond the calls for secession and as far as dialogue on one Sudan under a federal system. The secretary general of the Higher Peace Council said that he had also discussed with the IGADD [Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development] committee Sudan's vision for solving the southern problem. He announced that the Kenyan minister of scientific research, Professor Zacharia Onyonka, whose country was leading the initiative, would visit Khartoum in the coming days to discuss how to develop the agenda for negotiations within the framework of the federal system.

Deng said the government was determined to move forward in its efforts to establish peace but he said that the negotiation sessions could only be held once an agenda for negotiations, which was clear, convincing, and acceptable to both sides, had been reached.

Concerning the Copenhagen workshop of the friends of the IGADD countries held recently, Mr. Lino Rol said that the workshop confirmed the commitment of the countries which attended it to adhering to the unity of Sudan and support for the peace efforts. The participating countries were the United States, Canada, Italy, Sweden, and Norway.

Rebels Claim Government Intensifies Bombings

AB1804184195 Paris AFP in English 1426 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nairobi, April 18 (AFP)—The rebel South Sudan Independence Movement-Army (SSIM/A) claimed on Tuesday [18 April] that the Islamic-backed military regime in Khartoum had intensified bombing of rebel positions in southern Sudan.

In a statement issued here by SSIM/A's spokesman D.K. Mathews, the rebel group said the Sudanese air force had bombed Lopit Hills eight times on Monday and Tuesday, targetting rebel positions and civilian settlements surrounding the area. "The hills were subjected to four rounds of intense bombardment between 0600 GMT and 0800 GMT on Monday and four other rounds between 0600 GMT and 0830 GMT on Tuesday," SSIM/A spokesman said.

He pointed out that since Sudanese head of state 'Umar Hasan al- Bashir declared a unilateral ceasefire effective March 28, Khartoum forces had violated their own ceasefire 13 times at different times and locations throughout the south.

"These persistent violations of the ceasefire by Khartoum underline its belligerency and lack of commitment to the humanitarian programme of former US President Jimmy Carter's Global 2000 for eradication of Guinea-worms and river blindness in South Sudan," the statement declared. As a result, the statement said, "SSIM/A condemns these barbaric and inhumane acts of NIF (the National Islamic Front, which underpins the junta) against the innocent civil population targetted to benefit from the Global 2000 programme in South Sudan". "We urge the international community, the UN Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) and other international non-governmental organisations to condemn and bring pressure to bear on the NIF regime in Khartoum to halt its acts of terrorism on the civil population and to respect the ceasefire," the statement concluded.

Since the ceasefire came into effect, Khartoum has accused the rebels of violating the ceasefire and threatened to restart fighting again, while the rebels have counter-accused the government of violating its own ceasefire, but warned that they would fight back in self-defence.

The rebels have been battling against Khartoum's forces since 1983 to end domination of the mainly Christian and animist south by the Arabised Moslem north.

More than a million people have died and millions of others either displaced internally or forced to flee into exile in neighbouring countries since the civil war erupted nearly 12 years ago.

GCC Interior Ministers Discuss Regional Security

Bahraini Minister Opens Meeting

JN1804171495 Manama WAKH in English 1555 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, 18 Apr (WAKH)—Bahraini Interior Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah opened the third emergency meeting of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] interior ministers today.

In his opening address, the minister of the interior expressed his appreciation of the positive stands of the leaders, government and peoples of the GCC states in support of the security and stability of Bahrain as the GCC states' security is inseparable.

He added that the meeting would be an opportunity to exchange views on security developments in the region and discuss an intruding phenomena, alien to our Gulf societies.

He also expressed appreciation for GCC state's positive moves which linked their security with the security of Bahrain and underlined the unity of purpose and destiny.

He added that what happened in Bahrain was a serious test to the strength of our cohesion by foreign powers bent on undermine the security and stability of the Arab Gulf states, which proved their cohesion in line with the principles and goals of the GCC which were charted by the GCC heads of states.

He added that the country witnessed regrettable and painful events which were triggered on the basis of religious extremism and its perpetrators tried to instigate sedition and division and to undermine the harmonious cohesion and national unity of the Bahraini society.

He added that the perpetrators sought to spread chaos and damage the infrastructure and the economy in order to undermine development plans and investment projects in addition to destabilizing the security and stability of the country in a bid to achieve their illegal goals

The Bahraini minister of the interior said that the events were planned and instigated from abroad and the results of investigations proved an extremist foreign religious group, led by certain extremist clergy, was behind these events.

The group, he added, has been in contact with conspiring groups residing abroad. The events were coupled with an organized propaganda carried out by the leading conspirators and their supporters abroad.

He said that Bahrain's public security uncovered the elements of this extremist organization and dealt with it firmly within the framework of the law.

He added that the public security personnel made and sustained tremendous efforts to confront the events depending on their own resources and capabilities and succeeded in dismantling this organization and foiled its plans.

The minister of the interior said that the people of Bahrain were well aware at the dimensions and goals of these events and lent their full support to public security personnel. This, he added, contributed to the failure of the conspiracy which led the conspirators to commit extreme acts of arson and sabotage of public utilities and assassination. Also they tried to link the events with certain demands as an undercover for their real aims and intentions, which is the undermine of the security and stability in the country.

Bahraini Amir Emphasizes Cohesion

JN1804170695 Manama WAKH in English 1545 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Manama, 18 Apr (WAKH)—H.H. [His Highness] the Amir of Bahrain Shaykh Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, H.H. the Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, and H.H. the Crown Prince and Commander in Chief of the BDF [Bahraini Defense Forces] Shaykh Hamad Bin-Isa Al Khalifah received here this afternoon the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] ministers of the interior, the GCC secretary general and his assistants, and their accompanying delegations currently visiting Bahrain to attend their third extraordinary meeting.

They conveyed to H.H. the amir greetings of the GCC leaders and their wishes of further progress and prosperity, stability, and security to Bahrain.

During the audience, H.H. the amir welcomed the guests, wishing their meetings every success.

He expressed his satisfaction over the holding the meeting in Bahrain in order to boost cooperation and coordination in security fields.

H.H. the amir underlined the GCC stands toward the regretful events that Bahrain had witnessed from a foreign misleading group.

H.H. the amir underlined the solid cohesion between the GCC states in case of crises and threats to their security, stressing that any threat to Bahrain would be considered as a threat to other GCC states.

H.H. The amir, also, underlined that the security situation in Bahrain was under control of security bodies who are maintaining the security and stability of the country and its people as well as Bahrain' achievements.

H.H wished the GCC states further progress, prosperity, security and peace. [passage omitted]

Bahraini Minister on Regionwide Unrest

NC1804181395 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The interior ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] began an extraordinary conference in Manama this afternoon. They are discussing events in Bahrain and the meeting is seen as a show of GCC solidarity with one of its member states that has been the scene of disturbances for the past five months.

Bahraini Interior Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah delivered a speech during the meeting in which he stressed the link between his country's security and the security of the region. He added that the recent events were fueled by religious extremism and that the perpetrators sought to provoke sedition and divisions according to a plan drawn up and promoted by foreign parties.

Shaykh Muhammad affirmed that this extremist politico-religious organization has illegitimate objectives and is linked to a foreign organization backed by a foreign party. He explained that this foreign organization is linked to schemers residing in the country of that foreign party and some other countries, as he put it.

The Bahraini minister did not specifically identify this organization or the foreign country that sponsors it. Numerous other Bahraini officials, however, had previously hinted at an Iranian role in Bahrain's bloody demonstrations.

The Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain issued a statement in Beirut warning the GCC interior ministers that the Bahraini people will not bargain away their just and legitimate demands regardless of the circumstances.

The front added that unless the GCC interior ministers help find a solution to the situation in Bahrain in a way that safeguards the Bahraini people's rights, the current unrest might spread to the entire region.

Bahrain Situation Said Under Control

JN1804120595 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0525 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jeddah, 18 Apr (WAKH)—Bahraini Interior Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah has welcomed the interior ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states during their emergency meeting in Manama today.

In a statement published in today's issue of the Saudi newspaper 'UKAZ, he said: I welcome my brothers in the sisterly GCC states who are guests in their country and among their kinsfolk. I hope our emergency meeting will yield results that support Gulf security in terms of achieving security and stability for our states and people, based on our leaders' sound trends. [passage omitted]

Asked about the recent riots in Bahrain and if the interior ministers will discuss this issue during their emergency meeting, Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah said that the security situation in Bahrain is generally calm. He added that the acts of violence, sabotage, and terrorism will be quelled thanks to the prudent policy of the Bahraini leadership, the alertness of the security organizations and dedication of their men, as well as the solidarity of the citizens and residents within the framework of understanding and dialogue under one Bahraini family.

The Bahraini interior minister said that the recent events witnessed in Bahrain were not spontaneous but were deliberate and premeditated. He added that through judicial investigations, information, and recorded confessions, competent authorities ascertained that behind these incidents lies an extremist religious group that has illegitimate goals and is supported by outside quarters. He noted that security organizations in Bahrain have contained the situation and have it under total control.

The Bahraini interior minister expressed his satisfaction with the sentiments shown by brothers in the GCC states toward the situation in Bahrain. He said: We in Bahrain are very grateful for the true brotherly sentiments we sensed from brothers in the GCC council which stress that Bahrain's security is part of the Gulf's security as a whole. [passage omitted]

Ministers Issue Statement

JN1904082995 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0600 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 19 Apr (WAKH)—The interior ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] concluded their third extraordinary meeting last night.

During the meeting, the interior ministers held two working sessions chaired by Bahraini Interior Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah. At the conclusion of the meeting, Bahraini Interior Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah delivered a speech. Following is the text of his speech:

Your Highnesses and Excellencies the brother interior ministers, Your Excellency the GCC secretary general, members of the distinguished delegations: As we have concluded our [words indistinct] meeting, it gives me pleasure to laud the constructive security dialogue which dominated our discussions as well as the enlightened security views you kindly expressed.

These views have contributed to highlighting the end result and decisions of our meeting. These decisions will be positively reflected on our security march. We will focus on strongly and firmly confronting anyone who tries to tamper with the security and stability of our region, so GCC citizens and residents will enjoy security and tranquility. By so doing, we are guided by the directives of their majesties and highnesses our leaders, may God preserve them.

Once again, I repeat my thanks and appreciation for your effective efforts which contributed to making this meeting a success. In your name, brothers, I extend my thanks and appreciation to his excellency the GCC secretary general, his assistants, and the Secretariat's employees for the good efforts they made while preparing for this extraordinary meeting.

We pray to God to champion us and guide our steps. He is all-hearing and all-knowledgeable. May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

The meeting has issued the following press statement:

Stemming from the noble objectives on which the GCC was established and from the valuable principles whose foundations were laid by the GCC leaders; out of the belief in the unity of fate and goal; in affirmation of the fact that GCC security is an indivisible whole and that protecting the internal front and preserving the gains of the GCC peoples can only be achieved through consultations, coordination, and cooperation among the member states; in conformity with the assertion by the Supreme Council in its 15th round concerning the phenomenon of extremism and violence and its full rejection and condemnation of these practices with all their forms, motives, and bases as well as the Supreme Council's call for confronting this subversive phenomenon which departs from the spirit of Islam and conflicts with the tolerable Islamic law; and in continuation of the previous meetings and contacts among their highnesses and excellencies the GCC interior ministers, their highnesses and excellencies the GCC interior ministers held their third extraordinary meeting in the State of Bahrain on Tuesday 18 Dhi al-Qi'dah 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 18 April 1995, under His Highness Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah, interior minister of the State of Bahrain, and in the presence of His Excellency Staff Lieutenant General Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Badi, interior minister of the United Arab Emirates; His Royal Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd- al-'Aziz, interior minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; His Excellency Badr Bin-Sa'ud Bin-Harib, interior minister of the Sultanate of Oman; His Excellency Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, interior minister of the State of Qatar; and His Excellency Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah, interior minister of the State of Kuwait.

Their highnesses and excellencies the interior ministers were honored to meet with His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of the State of Bahrain, and to listen to his wise directives. His highness the amir expressed his satisfaction with the progress of joint work and with the distinguished level of security cooperation among the member states.

During their meeting, the ministers listened to a detailed report by His Excellency Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah, Bahraini interior minister, on the regrettable riots. The ministers then exchanged opinion on the latest security developments in their region and discussed the phenomena alien to our Gulf societies—phenomena that conflict with our religion and (?ideals), including the recent incidents in the State of Bahrain by some misguided extremist elements instigated by outside quarters to shake stability and sow the seeds of division and anarchy, using violence, killing, terror, and destruction of public and private establishments as a method and policy that serve only the tendentious persons who are harboring ill will toward this region and its Islamic creed and peoples.

The ministers praised the wisdom with which the leadership in the State of Bahrain dealt with the situation and the efficiency of the security organizations and their ability to confront and contain these events as a result of the solidity of the domestic front and the people's cohesion with their leadership and their denunciation of these alien methods. The ministers emphasize the following:

The GCC states stand by the side of the State of Bahrain and fully support the measures taken to entrench security and stability, thus proceeding from the principle of the GCC states' common destiny and the comprehensiveness of their security, which is indivisible.

The GCC states completely reject the phenomenon of extremism and fanaticism which leads to acts of violence and terrorism, and condemn all forms and motives of these practices. They stress their determination to confront this destructive phenomenon, which is unrelated to the spirit of the noble Islamic religion and which conflicts with its tolerant shari'a.

While expressing their pride in the spirit of citizenship and the spirit of one family enjoyed by the citizens of the GCC states, the ministers call on the GCC peoples to be vigilant and cautious about the destructive ideas and plans by some spiteful parties to sow the seeds of sedition, extremism, and violence, and against foreign news media reports, which are aimed at shaking the stability and security enjoyed by the GCC states.

The ministers also express their gratitude for the State of Bahrain, led by His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of the State of Bahrain, and his wise government and the faithful Bahrain people for the hospitality and good reception accorded to them, appreciating the good efforts made by His Excellency Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah, Bahraini interior minister, and the ministry's organizations in preparing for the meeting, which has greatly contributed to the success of the meeting and the adoption of appropriate decisions in support of security and stability in this region.

Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, interior minister of the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, delivered a speech on behalf of the GCC interior ministers, in which he thanked the amir of Bahrain for hosting this meeting, praising his the amir's wise directives to the ministers when he received them. He said his valuable directives will serve as a beacon that will enlighten them in their meetings.

He praised the results of the third extraordinary meeting of the interior ministers in terms of the positive and fruitful recommendations that serve the march of security cooperation of the GCC member states and said: We support words with deeds and this is what had earlier happened, thanks to the wise directives of the leaders of the GCC states and to our peoples' support. He stressed that by the cooperation of the interior ministries in the GCC states and all their organizations and sincere men, security was established in the region and will so continue, God willing. Concluding, the Saudi minister praised the blessing of security, safety, and stability enjoyed by the GCC states under the magnanimous Islamic shari'a.

Bahrain

Opposition Leader Moved to Different Location

JN1804151495 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Apr 95 pp 1, 6

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, AL-HAYAH—Official Bahraini sources said yesterday that the Interior Ministry has ordered the removal of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri from his house in Jamrah village in the suburbs of Manama to another unspecified location. This move comes within the framework of the security authorities' decision on 1 April to restrict Shaykh al-Jamri's movements.

The same sources said the Bahraini authorities will very soon present sufficient evidence linking a number of detainees with quarters and organizations abroad. This comes in light of the results of current investigations with the detainees.

Observers believe that moving Shaykh al-Jamri to another location will help ease the intensive security measures in the village and return life to normal.

Official sources had earlier said that the decision to place Shaykh al-Jamri under house arrest and ban visits to him was a preventive measure, because he is an influential religious man in the village that has recently witnessed unrest.

Shaykh al-Jamri is a former member of the Bahraini National Council (1973-1975). He received his religious education in al- Najaf in Iraq. He worked as a judge at al-Ja'fariyah [Shiite] court until 1988.

Trade Cooperation Protocol Signed With Jordan

JN1704171995 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1600 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jordan and Bahrain have signed a trade cooperation protocol to organize and develop commercial exchanges between them.

The agreement was signed in Manama by Minister of Industry and Trade 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib and Bahrain's Trade and Agriculture Minister Habib al-Qasim. The agreement provides for enhancing trade exchanges and the flow of agricultural, industrial, and livestock products between the two countries which will be exempt from customs fees.

It also calls for concluding other cooperation agreements in the areas of land transport, tourism, and financial markets. The two sides also agreed that Jordan provide manpower to Bahrain, including engineers, doctors, and teachers.

Mr. Abu-al-Raghib invited Bahrain to attend the Amman Middle East and North Africa economic summit due to be held in October. The minister also opened a Jordanian industrial fair in Bahrain.

Kuwait

National Assembly Views Constitutional Article 71

Shaykh Sa'd Letter Discussed

LD1804180195 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Assembly held its ordinary session at 0930 this morning under the chairmanship of Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'dun, speaker of the assembly. The letter of His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, containing the government's request from the Constitutional Court to explain Article 71 of the Constitution, was discussed at the session. The Assembly listened in this respect to the views of some members and the government's replies to them.

The speaker of the Assembly then announced that the session was adjourned to next Saturday to discuss the contents of the letter and look into the remaining items of the agenda.

Request for Ruling Criticized

LD1804185495 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 18 Apr (KUNA)—In its ordinary session today the National Assembly debated a request made by the government to the Constitutional Court to interpret Article 71 of the Constitution. During their debate of the topic, which was included in the agenda item of letters received by the assembly, members criticized the justifications for the request for the interpretation, although they acknowledged the government's constitutional right to make such a request.

The government had made a request to the Constitutional Court to interpret Article 71 of the Kuwaiti Constitution in order to settle the current dispute over whether the National Assembly has or does not have the right to consider decrees having the force of law issued when the assembly was not active. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Minister Outlines Saudi-Omani Border Talks

JN1804191095 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Apr 95 p 7

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development, by Husayn 'Abd-al-Ghani in Muscat; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ['Abd-al-Ghani] Was your decision to reduce the Armed Forces made in response to a foreign request or part of the deal of concluding the memorandum of understanding with Saudi Arabia?

[Ba-Jammal] The reduction in the Armed Forces is an internal issue that is linked to the cuts in government expenses. This issue was on the Yemeni agenda before any talks with the Saudis on the border issue. Basically, the reduction has nothing to do with the agreement or the dialogue that was held with the brothers in Saudi Arabia. Reducing the forces means, for us, reducing government expenses and reducing the budget deficit. The deficit has totaled more than 33 billion Yemeni riyals. After taking all the necessary measures to reduce the civilian and administrative expenses, we realized that we should pay attention to the military expenses. So, as part of a comprehensive plan for economic, financial, and administrative reform and reconstruction, we made a major decision to reduce manpower in Yemen, military and civilian. Naturally, when the political decision begins with the military sector, we find greater enthusiasm in the civilian sector, since it has always been charged that the military sector is the last to respond to economic reform, since this sector usually enjoys certain priorities. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Ghani] How far have you reached in implementing the memorandum of understanding with Saudi Arabia? How long do you expect a final agreement on the border with Saudi Arabia will take? Has the Saudi side accepted a Yemeni demand that the border demarcation agreement between the two countries include all borders, including the border with Oman?

[Ba-Jammal] We have chosen, along with the Saudi brothers, a formula which we called "memorandum of understanding." It has one meaning, that we decide on ways, rules, and foundations to resolve the border problems. The al-Ta'if agreement has an integral nature, and we want to restore its normal status.

The memorandum of understanding has another dimension. After the achievement of Yemeni unity, we can talk about complete settlement of border issues between us and our neighbors. In the past, the two political regimes that existed in Yemen used to avoid talking about the border issue. Each side believed that raising such issues had pitfalls and that it was unfamiliar. But now we act with full confidence because we see the existence of political unity and the sufficient will on the part of Yemeni decisionmakers that it is high time the border issues are settled. This is because the old reasons that were based on the infamous separation rules no longer exist. In brief, these issues are now open to dialogue and settlement. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Ghani] We are still talking about the border issue. Some time ago, the Yemeni president reportedly said that the final withdrawal of the Omani military forces will take place soon in accordance with the border demarcation agreement signed between the two countries. Has this withdrawal really taken place? Also, there is a previous agreement between the two countries on drawing topographic maps of the border between the two countries, which was done by an international firm, as happened between Oman and Saudi Arabia in the past. Has this previous agreement been implemented?

[Ba-Jammal] The border issue is usually handled in three stages. The first stage is that of description or definition. The second stage is that of initial agreement. Then, we have the defining of this initial agreement on the ground, and finally we have the demarcation or the setting up of concrete border marks. All this has been done between the two countries. The firm you have mentioned is continuing its work. Satellites are used here to fix the signs on the ground. Matters between us and Oman are excellent. There is complete understanding. There is absolutely no problem between us. Everything is proceeding according to the agreement. I can certainly say that we are proceeding with the Omanis in a normal and advanced way. We have full understanding and there is no problem.

['Abd-al-Ghani] But have the soldiers returned to the two sides of the border?

[Ba-Jammal] The necessary arrangements are being made now to complete this. These are only procedural arrangements, purely technical and procedural aspects. Also, there is a deadline for the work of the firm, which is a European firm, to finish the maps. We have agreed on this deadline from the beginning. [passage omitted]

Spokesman: Turkey 'Fully Responsible' for Incursion

JN1904072995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0625 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 19 Apr (INA)—Iraq has stressed that the Turkish invasion of Iraqi territory has nothing to do with the legitimate defense right stipulated in the UN Charter.

Reacting to a statement by Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ferhat Ataman [name as transliterated], a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry told INA that the Turkish invasion violates the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an independent member of the United Nations.

He added: Earlier, Iraq stressed that what Turkish officials call a political vacuum is the result of a U.S. conspiracy, in which Turkey became involved by agreeing to receive the U.S. and British "Hammer Force" on its territory. Iraq has told Turkey several times that cooperation with the rebels and agents in northern Iraq will negatively affect its own stability and security.

Noting what the Turkish official spokesman said about Turkey's concern about Iraq's unity and territorial integrity, the Iraqi spokesman said: Such concern will remain mere words unless it is translated into practical measures, particularly an immediate withdrawal from Iraqi territory, ending cooperation and coordination with the rebel terrorist groups in northern Iraq, and stopping coordination with the United States and Britain, which seek further instability and endeavor to infringe on the unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman added: What is required is coordination and cooperation between the Iraqi and Turkish Governments to face the threats against their security and future. This is the only, ideal way to ensure the return of stability to the borders between the two countries, and hence, the end of threats to Turkey's security and independence.

The spokesman noted that several Turkish officials and party leaders were candid when they stressed the importance of dialogue with Iraq instead of travelling to European capitals to seek solutions to Turkey's problems.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman stressed that the partial withdrawal of the invading Turkish forces is tactical and that the only way to prove Turkey's good intentions toward Iraq is to start a complete and immediate withdrawal of the invading Turkish forces.

The spokesman added: The assertion by the Turkish Foreign Ministry that the objective of the military operations is to protect the lives of civilian Iraqis is stunning. Established facts have confirmed that the invading Turkish forces committed several acts that violated human rights and international humanitarian law. These violations left several innocent citizens dead.

Concluding his statement, the Iraqi spokesman said: The Government of Iraq holds the Turkish Government fully responsible for these acts. Any attempt to escape responsibility for the violations and to blame others will be inconsistent with the facts resulting from the Turkish troops' incursion into Iraqi territory.

Condemnation of UN Resolution 986 Continues

Saddam Praises 'Steadfast' Citizens

JN1804210695 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 18 Apr (INA)—Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve and protect him, has stated that the enemies and those with premeditated designs have been surprised by the Iraqi people's rejection of the U.S. resolution after they besieged it for five years from the land, sea, and air—a siege that ranged from the aspirin to the very morsel of food. Even friends, considering the known meaning of friendship at a particular phase, have been surprised by the Iraqi people's stand toward the tendentious intentions of the designers of this resolution.

The president said: This great, patient, and steadfast people deserve that we all should serve it with all our hearts, efforts and thoughts and make available to them everything that will enable it to cross over to safe shores and take care of every detail in terms of facilities and utilities that we are presenting to these sincere people, beginning with making food available through distribution because one kilogram from here and one kilogram from there could constitute tons, and so it is in other aspects of life. Any lessening of the burdens of the people in one domain will relieve shortages in other domains. It will give them a greater ability to face what remains of the crossing phase, both in terms of food, health services and medicine, in public transportation, in distributing cooking gas bottles, in distributing industrial production, or in the field of processing personal papers, and even in dealing with the people in the police posts and in everything that might mitigate the suffering of the people and their psychological conditions, especially citizens who have no hidden means, like certain others.

Even television programs might show a case that could irritate the citizen, and which may not irritate him in ordinary circumstances. This is because this person does not suffer only from negative things. Pain may affect his production but his production will grow when contacts with him are just, including solidarity and deep cohesion.

I say that some people may attribute the negative phenomena to the unnatural situation or may justify them by the conditions of siege, but these people are not in the majority. We seek and struggle so that all become satisfied with any behavior or position, but when we are unable to deal with any specific issue, we always side with the choice of the majority and we work with a spirit of the one who knows where is the majority and what steps and ideas that can realize the wish of the majority when the requirements for this are appropriate in suitable condition and after sound thinking.

His excellency addressed the Council of Ministers by saying: When a minister takes a measure that deals with the citizens' interest, he should think very well first, and should ask himself if he will be ashamed by this measure one day. If the answer is yes, then you have to keep away from this measure, and if you have doubt whether the answer is yes or no, then you have to ask and examine it in terms of just how it is before reaching a conviction that it is a just measure. After that, if someone asks you about the feasibility of this measure, you can openly speak about it without fearing any blame, and then you will see how the citizens will have extraordinary energy and patience to endure.

His excellency added: There are two things that we need for administering the state. They are frankness and accuracy. Either of these two alone cannot allow us to cross. However, it seems that sometimes, work in the administration does not make frankness as clear as it should be. Therefore, we may sacrifice a certain amount of accuracy for the sake of frankness in order discover the malfunction and mistakes, thus, we benefit from frankness in order to get accuracy.

In this crossing stage we do not ask ourselves whether to cross or not, but we cross successfully with the least losses.

This has come in a comprehensive speech by leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, when he chaired the 16th session of the Council of Ministers.

The Council discussed agenda issues dealing with organization and follow up of preparations of the harvest campaign for the agricultural season 1994-1995 and meeting its administrative and technical requirements.

Following discussions that lasted for more than five hours, the Council adopted the necessary decisions on them, and the competent ministries and departments were given the necessary authority to achieve their tasks in the best way.

Ramadan: People Capable of Persevering

JN1804172695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1530 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 18 Apr (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has said that the enemies, whose rancor has led them to deny an entire people access to food and medicine, are the same people who are bragging about human rights.

Ramadan added that the people who have held out and shown patience over the past few years, despite the hardship and difficulties entailed, are capable of holding out and persevering longer in the next few months, which hold the promise of relaxation, given the positive results Iraq has achieved on the Arab and international scenes, as well as exposing the premeditated anti-Iraq U.S. policy, as recently manifested in the U.S. Resolution 986, which aims to achieve evil objectives.

In a speech delivered at the seventh annual pharmaceutical conference of the Iraqi Pharmacists Association, which began its work today, the vice president went on to say that the embargo hits worst in the areas of food and medical supplies, which are prerequisites for survival and associated with man's natural right to live and build a healthy body and sound mind. [passage omitted]

Minister Assails 'Wicked' Intentions

JN1904091495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2008 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 18 Apr (INA)—Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi has said Iraqis will not sell out their homeland or future in exchange for 1 kg of the flour they receive from the supply cards. He said Iraqis cannot accept the humiliation sought by U.S. Resolution 986. This came in an interview with Iraq Television today.

Answering a question on a statement broadcast by the BBC and attributed to one of the agents—why doesn't Iraq accept the recent resolution, when it did accept previous resolutions that constituted an encroachment on its sovereignty, such as Resolution 687 and 715—the culture and information minister said: Those resolutions, issued by the Security Council, do not encroach on Iraq's sovereignty despite the fact that they are bad resolutions. Iraq's acceptance of these two resolutions does not mean that Iraq should accept a worse resolution, that is, U.S. Resolution 986.

Minister Hammadi added that Resolution 687 has two objectives: The first calls for turning the Middle East into an area free from mass destruction weapons, as part of achieving balanced and comprehensive control of weapons in the region, as well as for imposing an international ban on chemical weapons. The second objective is part of the general objective, namely, Iraq's agreement to remove its mass destruction weapons in exchange for lifting the oil embargo, and consequently, lifting all types of trade sanctions. In other words, the resolution is a contractual procedure in which Iraq implements Paragraphs 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 while the Security Council implements Paragraph 22 of the same resolution which calls for lifting oil embargo.

The minister said: The preamble of the resolution and the details of the related paragraphs clearly show respect for Iraq's sovereignty and independence. In order to achieve the objective of the resolution, measures should be taken to remove mass destruction weapons and to make sure that such weapons are not manufactured or stored. He added that this is the content of Resolution 715 which is complementary to Resolution 687.

The culture and information minister added: Therefore, the measures to get rid of these weapons and the monitoring measures to make sure that such weapons are not manufactured or stored fall within international frameworks that are applied in disarmament agreements ratified between the former Soviet Union—Russia—and the United States. These two resolutions do not violate Iraq's sovereignty either on the legal level or in terms of implementation. When inspection teams plan to visit a site for storing or manufacturing weapons they notify us of their plans in advance. Iraqis then accompany them after learning the objective of their mission. If these teams try to go beyond their mission a crisis will occur. A crisis occurred when the so-called David Kay, who is a U.S. intelligence officer, tried to encroach on the building of the General Federation for Trade Unions and insisted on taking files illegally. Another crisis lasted for weeks at the Agriculture Ministry. Iraq rejected the violations of these teams.

The minister warned Arab brothers and Iraq's friends against believing in what the United States does in terms of beautifying its wicked resolution which will seriously endanger Iraq's security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. He said: We must comprehend the whole picture, not just part of it. We must study the mind of the enemy to know his real intentions and the scale of the evil, harm, and wickedness he harbors for Iraq and the Arab nation. Does the enemy really want to promote the level of nutrition and end the suffering of the Iraqi people, or does he seek to weaken Iraq's economy, obstruct its industry, and raise prices of commodities in Iraq so that the standard of people will be like that in Bangladesh and Africa?

Asked about the calls on Iraq by some brothers and friends to accept the U.S. resolution, Hamid Yusuf Hammadi said: The Iraqis do not relinquish their honor and dignity and do not ask others to fight their battle for them. The Iraqis were able, under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn, to impress the enemies with the chapter of construction, jihad, and new projects. This country has not turned into what the enemies want it to be. On the contrary, it is correct that a sector of the society—employees, low-income people, and the retired—are facing economic difficulty, but Iraq has not reached the level of poverty. They failed to achieve their objectives in the military, political, and media chapters, so they resorted to the unjust blockade, which was described by former Justice Secretary [title as received] Ramsey Clark as a mass destruction weapon.

The culture and information minister described the U.S. resolution as a maneuver and attempt to circumvent the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687. This is considered one of Iraq's rights which must be implemented by the Security Council now that Iraq has fulfilled its obligations in accordance with Resolution 687.

Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi said: According to the new U.S. resolution, only $500 million will be left for Iraq. The amount could also be less than this. However, if Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 is implemented Iraq will receive, during three months, 3 to 4 billion dollars for exporting oil. It will also receive $3.4 billion, its frozen assets in world banks; in addition to this, Iraq would receive several billion as banking facilities. Banks and companies are ready to finance many of Iraq's imports, as in the past, because they know that Iraq's economy is strong and Iraq's capability of payment is high.

Referring to the predictions that Iraq's oil reserves during the next three to four years will rise from 148 billion barrels to 300 billion barrels, thereby making Iraq number one and Saudi Arabia number two, the culture and information minister said: This will make the United States greedy for Iraq's oil.

Minister Hammadi added that U.S. greed for energy is based on its desire to find a source to finance the deficit, and at the same time, it seeks to control world politics and economy. The United States, he said, cannot have this because there is a resistance to this tendency from China, Europe, Russia, Japan, and southeast Asia.

Regarding what will happen after Iraq's rejection of the resolution, Hamid Yusuf Hammadi said: Afterward, we will call for implementing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687. In this, we are supported by three major countries; namely, Russia, France, and China, in addition to a number of nonaligned countries.

The culture and information minister added: Our rejection of this resolution will result in putting great pressure on the U.S. Administration, particularly after we were able to expose the wicked intentions of the U.S. Administration's attempt to implement this resolution, who hides poison inside it and whose objective is clear; namely, freezing Paragraph 22, misleading others, and cooling their enthusiasm to implement this paragraph of Resolution 687.

Minister Terms 986 'Serious Threat'

JN1704202395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1907 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 17 Apr (INA)—Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih has said that U.S. Resolution 986 poses a serious threat to the life of the Iraqi citizens as far as food is concerned. This is due to the complex mechanism created by this resolution, which is also flagrant interference in Iraq's sovereignty and national rights.

In an interview carried on Iraqi television tonight, Salih added that, in accordance with this resolution, the people's food will depend upon what the Iraqis write down in every phase of its implementation, beginning with the phase in which Iraq requests the purchase of food and until its distribution to citizens.

He continued: This will allow the foreigner to interfere as he pleases in a way unacceptable to any Iraqi citizen. These commodities cannot arrive in Iraq before the passage of at least six months if this resolution is implemented.

The trade minister said this resolution deliberately ignores other necessary commodities needed by the Iraqis such as spare parts for cars, vehicles, means of transportation, and requirements of production in the fields of agriculture, industry, clothes, and other consumer needs, taking into account the fact that the unjust blockade has been imposed for five years.

Salih pointed out that the sum allocated by the (?unjust) U.S. resolution is basically derived from the Iraqi people's resources and it does not add anything significant to the Iraqis' food supply. He added that the makers of this resolution seek to distribute food in a humiliating manner [words indistinct] that will pose a threat to Iraq's food security.

Kurdish Speaker on 'Malicious' Ruling

JN1804194095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1738 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 18 Apr (INA)—Baha'-al-Din Ahmad, speaker of the Legislative Council of the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan has emphasized that the Iraqi people's rejection of the U.S. Resolution 986 was not a surprise because this resolution is a blatant interference in Iraq's internal affairs, an infringement on its sovereignty, and a malicious attempt to prolong the unjust siege imposed on it.

In a statement to the Iraqi News Agency, the Legislative Council speaker said the council and its committees and members will continue their efforts to expose this evil resolution and the intentions of the United States and its allies in the Autonomous Region and their attempt to perpetuate the tragic situation which our Kurdish people are experiencing under foreign interference and the invasion by the Turkish forces of our national land.

He added the Legislative Council has formed a special committee to discuss the dimensions of this resolution, which will be discussed during its next meeting.

Ba'th Cadres Voice Rejection

JN1704202895 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade leader struggler Saddam Husayn has received a cable from the leading cadres in the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Iraq Command reaffirming that they stand, united, behind his wise leadership to foil the enemies' evil designs to harm Iraq's sovereignty and national independence.

In the cable they sent to his excellency at the end of their meeting today, the leading cadres voiced their categorical rejection of the vicious U.S. Resolution No. 986, which is worse and more dangerous than Resolutions 706 and 712.

The cable says: Our firm rejection of this resolution stems from our full awareness of its perils, and of its vicious designs, and of the persistent attempts to impose tutelage on our people's freedom of choice, plunder their resources, and undermine their revolutionary achievements and gains in all political, economic, social, and cultural walks of life. All these achievements were embodied in the vibrant model of a faithful and resurgent Arabism with Baghdad as its steadfast capital and the Mother of Battles as its immortal epic.

Comrade, leader, and the symbol of struggle: Thanks to your enlightened logic and your national and pan-Arab jihad and inspired by our Arab and Islamic heritage, our steadfast and loyal people have learned that the future will be forged by the faithful, patient, and persistent mujahidin who carry out productive and creative work, and sacrifice all that is precious.

They stressed that Resolution 986 sums up the imperialists rancor and meanness and is tantamount to sugar-coated poison. This resolution also aborts the efforts and the results that were attained on the Arab and international level toward the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 following Iraq's fulfillment of the requirements of Section C of the referent resolution and there no longer being any legal, political, or ethical justification for the perpetuation of the unjust embargo other than the designs of the imperialist-Zionist-anti-Arab conspiracy against Arab and Islamic Iraq whose banner, the banner of God is great, you uphold with loftiness and firmness toward glory.

Comrade 'Izzat Ibrahim, deputy secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Iraq Command, had chaired a meeting of the party's leading cadres to discuss the dangerous effects of UN Security Council Resolution No. 986.

The comrade deputy secretary of the Ba'th Party's Iraq Command reviewed the contents of the provisions of the U.S. resolution in terms of the violation of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the attempts to delay the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 and the evil and hostile designs against great Iraq and its militant people.

The comrade leading cadres of the party renewed the pledge to His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn to pursue the jihad and sacrifice under the banner of God is great until decisive victory is scored on the enemies of the nation and the homeland.

The meeting was attended by the comrade members of the organizational committee in the Ba'th Party's Iraq command.

Assembly Committees Condemn Ruling

JN1804173895 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Awqaf and Religious, Health, and Social Affairs Committee of the National Assembly has met under Committee Chairman Sa'dun Khalifah. The committee members discussed the serious dimensions of the provisions enshrined in the malicious U.S. Resolution 986.

Shawqi Sabri Murqus, senior under secretary of the Ministry of Health, who was hosted by the committee, thoroughly reviewed the serious impact of the medicine embargo on the health situation in Iraq. He noted that this embargo has adversely affected the performance of health institutions and endangered people's lives. He said that the new U.S. resolution has not taken into account the basic requirements of health projects and institutions as well as the medicine shortage in Iraq.

The committee asserted that the U.S. resolution will neither improve the citizens' health situation, nor rehabilitate health institutions inasmuch as it will infringe on Iraq's national sovereignty and deny its people the chance to enjoy their resources and national wealth in the best possible manner in order to promote their prosperity and progress in all areas, including the health area. This is because this resolution denies Iraqi health institutions the opportunity to improve the health situation and provide the medical supplies needed by Iraqi citizens, which have been denied them as a result of the imposition and continuation of the unfair sanctions, Murqus argued.

In a related development, the Environment Committee of the National Assembly has met under Committee Chairman 'Abd-al-Karim Jihad to discuss the dimensions of the U.S. Resolution No. 986. The committee members expressed their categorical rejection of the U.S. resolution, and described it as a serious resolution that has overlooked the real needs of environmental projects, which were hurt by the treacherous 30-state aggression, not to mention the neutralization of these projects as a result of the acute shortage in the spare parts required. This has adversely affected the Iraqi citizens' lives and environment, the committee members contended.

It is to be recalled that the National Assembly's permanent committees have continued their meetings to debate the negative repercussions of the U.S. Resolution 986 on the Iraqi people's lives, as well as its failure to heed their needs.

Popular Forces Body Denounces Ruling

JN1804174795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1525 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 18 Apr (INA)—The General Secretariat of the Arab Popular Forces Conference [APFC] has strongly condemned UN Security Council Resolution [UNSC] 986, which jeopardizes Iraq's unity, sovereignty, independence, and national security.

APFC Secretary General Sa'd Qasim Hammudi said that the malicious U.S. resolution is marked by acrimony, ill-will, instigation, and deceit. It is an attempt to impose custodianship on an independent state and a free and age-old people, he added.

Hammudi went on to say that the resolution, which is an amended version of Resolutions 706 and 712, is worse and more harmful than these two resolutions. Nonetheless, it reflected the same conspiratorial political motives of the imperialist-Zionist alliance that were behind the passage of these two resolutions.

Hammudi indicated that those who adopted this resolution should have taken drastic measures to deal with the Iraqi people's suffering by completely lifting the unfair sanctions through implementing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687, particularly since Iraq has honored its commitments as enshrined in Section C of the aforesaid resolution. Moreover, those who adopted this resolution should have authorized Iraqi oil exports and the release of frozen assets, Hammudi added.

Concluding his statement, Hammudi urged the vanguards of Arabism and its living forces to realize the dangers inherent in Resolution 986, to reject and denounce this resolution, and to continue to mobilize efforts toward the application of pressure on the UNSC in order to bring about a revocation of the economic sanctions on Iraq and put an end to the criminal genocide targeting the people of Iraq.

Daily: U.S. Exceeding Authority

JN1904092195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0740 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 19 Apr (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has stressed that the other parties mentioned in U.S. Resolution No. 986 will be the major beneficiary of that resolution, not Iraq or its people.

In an article today, the paper, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: The money allocated in this resolution is basically Iraqi money, dispensed to several parties by a party that has no authority to do so.

The paper adds: Only the Iraqi people and their leadership, and no one else, have the right to decide how to use, allocate, and dispense this money, which is purely Iraqi.

The paper notes that according to Resolution 986, the United States can dispense through the UN Security Council rewards to the United Nations, its specialized agencies, inspectors, and certified auditors, and to Turkey and the rebel gangs in northern Iraq without any condition and these parties can decide freely how to spend them. Meanwhile, humiliating conditions are imposed on the party to which the money belongs, and which has the right to use it.

The paper adds: Clinton and Major have a spell of generosity when they, through their envoys, dictate that the larger part of exported oil must be transported through the Turkish pipeline so that they can use the Iraqi money to help activate the Turkish economy, which deteriorated because of Turkey's wrong position on the embargo.

The paper adds: These rewards, which are taken away from the Iraqis' labor and legitimate money and which encroach on their right to utilize their national resources, are dispensed unconditionally. No conditions are set on the way these moneys are spent, even when the matter concerns the Iraqis' food and medical imports.

The paper adds: The Iraqi people's categorical rejection of this evil and conspiratorial U.S. resolution is based on the fact that the Iraqi people will never allow anyone to take advantage of their national resources and money without their, and nobody else's, approval. It is also based on the fact that the Iraqi people have the right to freely decide how to use this money in any way which they feel agrees with their interests, principles, and the pillars of their development.

The paper stresses that no one can sell a barrel of Iraqi oil without the approval of those concerned—the Iraq people and their leadership. It further stresses that the only just solution is to implement the UN Security Council's commitments in accordance with Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 which stipulates an end to the embargo.

Concluding its article, AL-THAWRAH stresses that the fate of this conspiratorial resolution will not be any better than that of the similar resolutions that aimed to encroach on Iraq's sovereignty and interfere in its domestic affairs. The recent U.S. resolution will blatantly fail in the face of the Iraqi people's steadfastness and valiant defiance.

Opposition Radios Comment on Resolution 986

Saddam's Failed Policies Criticized

NC1804170595 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1525 GMT 18 Apr 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Security Council Resolution 986 would serve the Iraqi people's interests and would alleviate their suffering. They have been afflicted by the policies and practices of Saddam Husayn and his dictatorial regime. The Baghdad regime refused this resolution because it would alleviate the Iraqi people's predicament. The alleviation of the Iraqi people's suffering and saving their women, children, and old from starvation, disease, and certain death is unacceptable to the Iraqi regime. So it is only natural that the Iraqi regime should reject this resolution. All observers of the nature of this regime and of its erroneous course in dealing with the Iraqi people and their legitimate aspirations to live like other peoples free from wars and repressive and terrorist policy had expected this result.

Anyway, the helpless Iraqi people have a right to ask how long Saddam can reject the Security Council resolutions passed in favor of them. How long can the Iraqi people continue to pay the price for mistakes they did not make, the price for Saddam Husayn's erroneous policy? To answer these questions we maintain that the sons of our Iraqi people must realize that Saddam Husayn is the culprit who caused them all these tragedies and horrible suffering. His erroneous and failed policies are responsible for starving the Iraqi people. Thus, it is unreasonable for a regime that antagonized its people for one fourth of a century and used them as a means to achieve its aggressive goals and as fuel for his losing wars to save its people. Saddam is the raison d'etre for his people's starvation, misery, and deprivation. It is unreasonable for such a regime to turn overnight into a savior of the people and defender of their rights. As long as the Iraqi regime remains in power, it will continue to reject all UN resolutions intended to alleviate the Iraqi people's suffering. The dictatorial regime is impervious to the Iraqi people's horrible predicament. While the masses of our Iraqi people live in dire economic circumstances and while Iraqi women, children, and old people are dying of starvation and ravished by disease and epidemics, the Baghdad rulers persist in rejecting the Security Council resolutions that are passed to serve the interests of the Iraqi people. The regime continues to build magnificent palaces to the ruling family, which is plundering the Iraqi people's wealth. We believe that the only and best way to save the Iraqi people from the horrific tragedies lies in collaboration of all segments of the Iraqi people to unify their stand and unleash their potential and focus on the central goal of toppling the dictatorial regime to save the people from its evils.

Regime-U.S. Said Colluding on Blockade

NC1804183395 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 18 Apr 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although it has not yet informed UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali of its decision, the regime's government has formally rejected the latest Security Council resolution: Resolution 986.

The UN secretary general regretted the Iraqi Government's decision, declaring that it is unsound and out of step with the circumstances and requirements of the current stage. He noted that the rejection will leave the Iraqi people still suffering from the UN blockade and deny them a way out of this vicious circle.

In a miserable attempt, the regime tried to prepare the climate for its rejection of the resolution by organizing demonstrations and carrying out a propaganda exercise. It directed [Vice President] Taha Yasin Ramadan and [National Assembly Speaker] Sa'di Mahdi Salih to criticize the UN resolution and describe it as an infringement of Iraq's sovereignty and its people's dignity. The regime used all the propaganda and revolutionary terms that it is good at exploiting.

Political observers attribute the regime's rejection of the resolution to several causes and factors, notably that the regime did not stand to benefit from the lifting of the UN blockade because the resolution stipulated that the UN secretary general should supervise the revenue from the oil sales it allowed. In this way the regime realized it would not be able to control this revenue apart from some control over the distribution of the foodstuffs and medicines to be purchased with the oil proceeds. The regime realized that the proceeds would not be sufficient to fulfill its financial and propaganda needs.

The current situation serves the regime's interest. Some humanitarian organizations are carrying out their work by the same method, which ensures that the regime makes a profit and has the opportunity to tighten the noose on our people, take revenge on them, and viciously starve them.

The regime is giving the United States justification to continue its pressure on Iraq, particularly as it has started to feel embarrassed about maintaining the UN blockade at a time when some permanent members of the UN Security Council are asking that it be lifted.

In this way the regime is furnishing legal grounds for the U.S. decisions and measures against Iraq. Some observers consider this to be clearly a joint conspiracy by the regime and the United States. They say that each party plays different roles on the political scene and that our enduring Iraqi people are the victim of this dirty game.

UN Urged To Provide for South

NC1704163395 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 17 Apr 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last Friday [14 April], the Security Council issued a new resolution on Iraq, No. 986, in which it approves of the sale of some oil, amounting to $2 billion every six months, under the supervision of the United Nations. As a result of this resolution, Iraq will be allowed to export 21,000 barrels per day. The objective of the resolution was made public: To provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. This resolution is an extension of the previous two resolutions, issued by the Security Council earlier, numbers 706 and 712 of 1991, where [words indistinct] allowed Iraq to sell some oil amounting to $1.6 billion for six months, which could be renewed for another six months. The new resolution offers almost the same conditions as the previous two resolutions, but differs in that it allows the sale of a greater amount of oil and provides more revenue, which usually [words indistinct]. Some of this revenue, about one-third, goes to the Compensation Fund. Another part is allocated for humanitarian aid to Kurdistan under the supervision of the United Nations. And some will be spent on UN operations in Iraq and other such secondary expenditures.

The regime was hoping to accomplish greater successes through Tariq 'Aziz's travels to New York and his extensive contacts there with various nations' delegations, particularly the [word indistinct] members of the United Nations. He tried to [words indistinct] the sanctions on it. But what actually happened was that the United States and Britain submitted a draft resolution to the Security Council, which was submitted for approval by Argentina and Oman and then adopted, allowing the regime exports worth $4 billion a year. Thus, the regime failed to convince other countries in the Security Council to adopt a resolution that meets its own demands. What is noticeable in the articles of the new resolution is that it allocates $130-to-$150 million for humanitarian aid to Kurdistan under the supervision of the United Nations.

But we find no mention of southern Iraq, the marshes in particular, which like Kurdistan are being subjected to deliberate deprivations and a blockade on food and medicine, in addition to continuous military activities and operations to destroy the environment. All this has no parallel in Kurdistan, which enjoys international protection. We believe that this is a clear omission in the resolution, whose effects will certainly be negative in terms of where the resolution is implemented—that is, if the Security Council committees do not try to deal with the situation.

The other point we would like to mention in this regard is that the resolution grants the regime the freedom to do what it pleases with the foodstuffs and medicines. The resolution calls on the regime to make a moral pledge that it will distribute them equitably inside Iraq. This is a point we have drawn attention to many times. From experience, we know that the regime's stance on southern Iraq and the marshlands cannot change if there is no supervision. Therefore, we urge the United Nations to reconsider the system of supervising the regime's sound application of the standards set by the Security Council.

Opposition Attacks Army Vehicles; Soldiers Killed

NC1804153595 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The heroes of the Islamic resistance attacked an army vehicle belonging to the 25th

Brigade in the al-Khanzarah area of al-Basrah Governorate's al-Madinah District in late March. They destroyed the vehicle and killed the commander of the First Regiment of the 25th Brigade, who was riding in the car with three bodyguards.

Earlier in March our mujahidin attacked a military patrol of the 25th Brigade, setting an armored vehicle on fire and killing seven of the regime's mercenaries, including a lieutenant. They captured several machine guns and rocket launchers, including a DShk machine gun.

Government Security Official Killed

NC1804163895 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The heroes of the Islamic resistance continue to pursue the regime's criminal mercenaries, who have perpetrated heinous crimes against our people. They inflicted the just death punishment on the criminal Mukayish 'Ayyal in front of the al-Dayr Security and Police Headquarters in al-Basrah Governorate in retribution for his crimes against believer families and their sons in that area of our dear Iraq.

Army Morale Said Low; Desertion on 'Massive' Scale

NC1804155295 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to reliable reports from inside Iraq, the Iraqi Army is suffering very low morale and most troops have lost the will to fight against the Iraqi populace and its struggler forces.

The reports add that the Army is facing real difficulties in obtaining foodstuffs, uniforms, and transport for its troops. This has reached the point where the sight of troops asking the public for food has become a normal daily occurrence.

The reports note growing resentment among the soldiers and a greater incidence of desertion. The reports note that this is clear proof that the Army is opposed to the killing and extermination of the Iraqi people carried out by Saddam's regime.

Last year the tyrant Saddam issued unjust instructions including an order to cut off the ears and brand the foreheads of deserters in an attempt to control the army and restrict desertion. According to official statistics issued by the regime, 70 percent of some units' personnel deserted.

The reports note that the regime's cruel measures failed to stem desertion on such a massive scale. In the past three months desertions rose to new heights and numerous Iraqi troops joined the opposition forces in major battles in the southern and northern areas in February and March.

Rockets Fired at MKO Depot in Baghdad; No Damage

NC1804155395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1510 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 18 Apr (MENA)—Two RPJ-18 rockets were fired at a depot for the Iranian opposition Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization [MKO] in Baghdad this morning, causing no damage.

In a statement to the MENA correspondent in Baghdad, a spokesman for the MKO office in Baghdad said the culprits escaped before completing their attack after MKO guards exchanged fire with them.

The spokesman directly blamed Iranian diplomats in Baghdad for the incident. He affirmed that the MKO reserves the right to defend itself against terrorist attacks. He called for the legal prosecution of the terrorists and for apprehending and punishing them. He also called for the closure of the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad for carrying out espionage and terrorist acts.

The spokesman described today's attack against the MKO's depot as a desperate and futile terrorist attempt by Iran reflecting its authorities' confusion.

An MKO camp in Iran—the Ashraf camp—was shelled by surface-to-surface missiles in October and November 1994.

U.S. Intelligence Funding of Rivals Criticized

MM1804131195 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Apr 95 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Iraqi Opposition Faction Condemns U.S. Intelligence Financing of 'National Congress'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—The Free Iraqi Council (opposition) has expressed its discontent at what has been reported about U.S. intelligence financing of another opposition organ, namely the [Unified] Iraqi National Congress. In a statement, of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has received a copy, the council said:

"While we condemn that blatant interference by a secret intelligence organ of a foreign state in Iraqi opposition affairs, we request the U.S. Administration to reveal the names of all the individuals and groups who have received sums of money from it, specifying these sums, so that our people will know all the facts about them."

The Free Iraqi Council statement, which is signed by its leader, Sa'd Salih Jabr, says: "A detailed article published by THE NEW YORK TIMES on 11 April cited a U.S. Administration official as saying that the CIA has asked Congress to agree to allocate $19 million to spend on operations to undermine the regime in Iraq and to curb what the administration termed Iran's expansionist ambitions." And the newspaper said that "the sum in question includes $15 million for operations against Iraq and $4 million to be spent against Iran, in implementation of the dual containment policy adopted by the Clinton administration."

The opposition council statement pointed out that it has some questions regarding the CIA's and U.S. officials' insistence on considering the National Congress "an umbrella" for the opposition forces. The council accused the National Congress of becoming markedly weakened, demanding clarifications about the U.S. support.

Daily Reacts to 'False Claims' on Draft Resolution

JN1304121695 Baghdad INA in English 0914 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 13 (INA)—The Iraqi AL-THAWRAH paper stressed that the Iraqi people were and are still keeping rejecting the exchange of the piece of bread with the dress of humiliation. Attempts carried out by those braggers who are trying to claim themselves custodians on the will of this nation, would be foiled and they will be obliged to swelling their hatchets and invalid allegations. [sentence as received]

The daily, mouthpiece of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, has refuted in its editorial entitled "Britain...The Scabby Fellow" the false claims of the British delegate to the Security Council David Hannay who alleged that the fresh American-British draft resolution is not harbouring a threat to Iraq's territorial integrity and Iraq's rejection of it should be condemned.

We know much about this Hannay and his country's ugly policy aimed at dividing and dismantling nations, it added, clarifying that our Arab nation is still suffering from the tragedy created by the British colonialism that had plundered our wealth and turned our nation into a backward one.

It elaborated that Hannay deadly defiance to marketing the new well-known-targets-joint American-British draft resolution is simply an attempt to obstruct the implementation of the reciprocal commitments of the Security Council in conformity with Resolution 687 and is considered as violation and complete prejudice of Iraq's sovereignty.

SAIRI Denounces Recent Arrests in Bahrain

NC1304161195 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1440 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The International Relations' Department of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] today issued a statement denouncing the fresh arrests in Bahrain, particularly the arrest of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir al-Hijri on 1 April. The statement said: As part of the series of harassment and arrests that the Bahraini ulema [Muslim community] have been subjected to for months because of normal demands, the Government of Bahrain on 1 Dhu al-Qi'dah 1415 hegira, corresponding to 1 April 1995, made new arrests. The honorable Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir al-Hijri, along with other faithful people, were arrested.

We denounce and condemn such arbitrary measures and demand the immediate release of Shaykh al-Hijri and all other detainees and demand that he be given freedom to exercise his religious duties. We believe that the Bahraini people's demands and rights must be granted and the repressive measures adopted to confront the popular will must be changed. Interference leading to political and security tension must be abandoned and the people's freedom to express their opinions must be guaranteed. We demand the return of those deported for similar incidents in the past and believe that responding to the just popular demands through repression and terrorism will only complicate things further and confront the regime with a constant challenge and test.

Saudi, Kuwaiti Bases for U.S. Aircraft Protested

JN1404122995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1036 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Apr (INA)—Iraq has informed the Arab League that the rulers of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait continue to provide facilities to U.S. and British aircraft that violate Iraqi airspace, noting that this poses a serious threat to Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter sent yesterday to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League said the aircraft violated Iraqi airspace, taking off from their bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, conducting 341 hostile sorties during 1-8 April.

A list detailing the violations was enclosed with the letter.

Minutes of Agreement Signed With PRC Delegation

JN1604154495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1440 GMT 16 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 16 Apr (INA)—Iraq and China today signed the minutes of an agreement at the end of the meetings of the eighth session of the Iraqi-Chinese Joint Committee for Economic, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation.

Dayf 'Abd-al-Majid Ahmad, deputy director of the Military Industrialization Organization [MIO] and deputy head of the Iraqi side in the committee, signed the minutes for Iraq, and Liu Shanzai, Chinese vice minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation and deputy head of the Chinese side in the committee, signed for the Chinese side.

Addressing the signing ceremony, Dayf 'Abd-al-Majid Ahmad stressed Iraq's desire to promote cooperation with China in the service of the two friendly peoples' interests in all fields, particularly the oil, irrigation, transportation, communications, industrial, and commercial fields.

Liu Shanzai praised the agreement which serves the two countries' mutual interests in all fields, stressing his country's desire to promote cooperation with Iraq.

The minutes include a number of fields of trade, scientific, and technical cooperation, and the possibility for implementing joint projects between the two countries.

The two sides agreed to hold the meetings of the ninth session of the Iraqi-Chinese Joint Committee for Economic, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation in Beijing next year.

The Chinese ambassador in Baghdad and a number of Chinese specialists in economics and trade attended the signing ceremony.

PRC Minister Praises Talks, Departs

JN1704193195 Baghdad INA in English 1320 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 17 (INA)—Chinese External Trade and Economic Cooperation Undersecretary Liu Shanzai left Baghdad on Monday winding up a five days visit to the country.

In a statement to INA, the Chinese official praised outcomes of talks he had conducted with Iraqi officials during the 8th session of Iraq-China Joint Committee.

He said that an agreement for cooperation in the fields of oil trade, industry, health, irrigation, agriculture and transport and communications was signed between Iraq and China.

The Chinese official further said that his country is keen on boosting bilateral cooperation ties in different spheres to serve interests of both friendly peoples.

It is to be recalled that the 9th annual session of the Iraqi-Chinese Joint Committee for economic and trade cooperation will be held in Beijing next year.

Former Agriculture Minister Reportedly Imprisoned

NC1604145795 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 16 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed sources in Baghdad have stated that an Interior Ministry court has sentenced former agriculture minister Karim Hasan Rida to 15 years in prison on charges of negligence of duty. It is Saddam's habit to level these accusations at anyone who objects to or makes remarks on general issues. [passage indistinct]

Decree Appoints New Minister

JN1704132795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 17 Apr (INA)—A presidential decree was issued today appointing Khalid 'Abd-al-Mun'im Rashid to the post of agriculture minister. Khalid 'Abd-al-Mun'im Rashid was working as an adviser at the Presidency.

Second Phase of Saddam River Completed

JN1304120795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1545 GMT 12 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 12 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has received a cable from Industry and Minerals Minister Staff General Husayn Kamil Hasan in which he informed his excellency that the mujahidin of the Military Industrialization Organization have accomplished the second phase of Saddam River, represented by linking the Ishaqi drainage canals with the river. [passage omitted]

Peres Discusses Possible 'Full' Golan Withdrawal

TA1804185195 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Apr 95

[Report on interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik on 18 April; place not given]

[*FBIS Translated Text*] [*Anchor Hayim Yavin*] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres speaks today, for the first time, about a possible full Israeli withdrawal on the Golan up to the international border, that is—a full withdrawal. Mr. Peres made the remarks in a conversation with out political correspondent Gadi Sukenik following his new suggestion that the course of negotiations with Syria—which are deadlocked—be changed. Gadi Sukenik is in our Tel Aviv studio.

Gadi, is Peres trying to thaw the freeze in the negotiations with Syria at all cost?

[Sukenik] Yes, so it seems. Mr. Peres speaks of a deadlock that has been created in the talks. There is no way out at present, we are stuck, he says. When we talked in the only channel Israel had, the security arrangements with the Syrians, it did not work. We do not understand what motivates al-Asad, Peres told me. We are trying to attain a breakthrough. He suggested that the talks deal with all the elements: security, normalization and the nature of peace, withdrawal and borders, and timetables. A more comprehensive discussion of all four aspects of the talks.

Were these options presented to the Americans? I asked Peres this evening. Here is what he said:

[Begin recording] [Peres] The two options were discussed with the Americans. They are both on the agenda.

[Sukenik] And one of them had, in fact, been tried and failed.

[Peres] At this stage, I would not want to say that it has failed absolutely. It is stuck, at this stage.

[Sukenik] Suppose the Syrians refuse, will you say there is no other way out at the moment?

[Peres] Look, there is no such thing. We will keep looking.

[Sukenik] Mr. Peres, is this new offer of yours acceptable to the prime minister?

[Peres] We work together, and we look for ways together. I believe that both of us would like to attain a breakthrough. [end recording]

[Sukenik] At this point, the foreign minister explained why the final Israeli withdrawal line on the Golan should not be revealed ahead of time. Pay attention to the answer.

[Begin Peres recording] The Syrians speak of the lines of 4 June 1967. We spoke—those who did, that is the governments of the late Eshkol and Begin—of the international line. That is to say that you must have some margin of time and space for the negotiations. [end recording]

[Sukenik] So in fact, Mr. Peres speaks of—and this is the first time as far as I can recall that he or Rabin spoke about this—the option of a withdrawal to the international border. The Syrians say 4 June 1967, that is al-Hama and the part of Lake Tiberias on their territory, and Israel is saying—the international border. That is, Israel accepts a full withdrawal, but it is not willing to have the Syrian soldiers stationed on the shores of Lake Tiberias. This is the difference. It is very small on the ground. Meaning, this is the first time the option of a full withdrawal is explicitly being raised.

Peres: Remarks 'Misunderstood'

TA1904084495 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 19 Apr 95 p 3

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres triggered a political storm last night after his remarks on Israel Television [ITV] were construed as the first public pronouncement concerning Israel's willingness to withdraw from the Golan Heights up to the international border.

Peres told MA'ARIV last night that his remarks had been misunderstood and that all he had meant to do was to mention once again the 1967 government resolution that spoke of signing a peace treaty with Syria "based on the international border and Israel's security needs." [passage omitted]

After the interview last night, Peres said that the sentence "you must have some margin of time and space for the negotiations" proves that he did not mean to say that the current government, too, has already agreed to a withdrawal to the international border.

Senior political sources said last night that Peres has in recent days intensified his "personal moves" in a bid to bring about a breakthrough in the negotiations with Syria. Within this context, Peres voiced his proposal that Israel negotiate all the issues with Syria in parallel, rather than focus only on the security arrangements in the Golan Heights.

The political sources added that in the negotiations being held with Syria Israel has not yet agreed to draw any withdrawal lines and has most definitely not announced or signalled its willingness to withdraw to the international border. It should nevertheless be pointed out that most cabinet ministers believe this is Peres' and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's position, even though this has not been specifically relayed to the Syrians. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 19 April publishes on pages 1 and 2 a report by Alon Pinkas and ITIM which adds: "A source close to Peres said that Peres is 'fuming' over ITV's presentation of his remarks on the border with Syria. ITV's diplomatic correspondent Gadi Sukenik, in presenting his taped interview with Peres, said that the remarks hinted at Israel's negotiating position."]

Opposition Reacts to Remarks

TA1904052395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The opposition has reacted sharply to statements made by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres on Israel Television last night about a withdrawal to the international border on the Golan Heights, which varies from a Syrian demand that Israel pull back to the 4 June 1967 lines. Peres said successive Israeli governments, from Levi Eshkol to Menahem Begin, have talked of the international border.

Likud Knesset Member [MK] 'Uzi Landau says Peres' remarks gave an indication of Rabin's real position. According to Landau, the premier is hiding his true stands from the public prior to the upcoming elections. The Likud's coordinating committee will meet in Qatzrin today, where Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu said they will respond to Rabin's position.

Tzomet MK Eli'ezer Sandberg said Peres is now starting to understand that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is interested in territory, while Israel wants peace. Sandberg said due to the different goals between the two sides, it is preferable that the territory remain in Israel's hands.

Netanyahu, Cabinet Ministers on Remarks

TA1904120495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Members of the Likud bureau convened in Qatzrin at noon and then toured the Golan Heights with settlement leaders. At the meeting, Likud leaders attacked Minister Peres for his remarks about a withdrawal to the international border and called on the government to resign. Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu said that, in practice, President al-Asad has already received the entire Golan and is now asking for parts of the Galilee, such as the peak of Mount Meron.

Minister Shim'on Shetrit said Minister Peres was wrong to publicly express readiness for a far-reaching withdrawal. Minister Shetrit believes that the foreign minister does not have a mandate to make such a declaration without authorization from the Labor Party.

On the other hand, Minister Shulamit Aloni justified Minister Peres' remarks, saying the time has come to drop our illusions. She said that the Golan belongs to the Syrians and that in order to make peace, we must give it back in exchange for suitable security arrangements.

Peres To Meet PA's Nabil Sha'th in Cairo

TA1804190795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres will meet Palestinian Authority [PA] representatives for a discussion of the bulk of issues on the agenda in the peace negotiations next week in Cairo. A senior PA source has said that the precise date of the meeting has not been slated yet.

The Palestinian delegation will be headed by Nabil Sha'th. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] will not be heading the Palestinian delegation, although it has been decided, in the Tunis discussions, that he is the head of the delegation. This is due to his dispute with 'Arafat over his authorities.

Rabin on Restricting Palestinians, Hebron Squad

TA1804133895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says Israel continues to face the need to maintain security and prevent the uncontrolled flow of Palestinian workers and vehicles into Israel from Gaza and the West Bank. Rabin was speaking at the Nahal 'Oz crossing point between Israel and the Gaza Strip after visiting the area this morning, where he met with local commanders and also with settlers from the Qatif Bloc.

The prime minister said: Israel must find the balance between not causing harm to the economic livelihood and ties of Palestinian workers and Israel, and at the same time preventing terrorists and, what he called bloody murderers filled with hatred for us, from threatening Israelis. The priority must be security, he said, even though it may cut down the number of Palestinians allowed to work in Israel, and create economic difficulties or disturb the transfer of goods between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 18 April adds that "during his visit to the Gaza Strip today, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin disclosed that the members of the squad that was eliminated in Hebron had been under surveillance for over a year.

["According to him, there are signs that the Palestinian Authority has stepped up its activity against terror. He added that the defense establishment will make a great effort to secure the mobility of civilians and soldiers on the roads, and will consider armoring buses and other vehicles."]

Baraq, Beilin 'Probably' To Join Cabinet in Jul

TA1804185395 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Apr 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ehud Baraq and Yosi Beilin will, probably, join the cabinet on 15 July. This was reported by senior and knowledgeable sources to our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik. Baraq has recently been unofficially offered a ministerial post in the Prime Minister's Office, and Yosi Beilin may be appointed religious affairs or economic minister. The former chief of staff has not yet officially announced that he is joining the cabinet.

Our correspondent adds that the new round of appointments will not include Histadrut Secretary General Hayim Ramon.

Ties With Gulf States, Tunisia Reported 'Cooling'

TA1804190095 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Apr 95

[Video report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bilateral relations between Israel and the Gulf States are cooling down. This week, Oman called off the visit of a large economic delegation from Israel. Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' trip to Qatar was canceled. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has frankly admitted that the dream of a new Middle East is evaporating. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports on what is left of the radiant economic vision promised in peacetime.

[Begin Rosen recording] In what is yet another manifestation of the deep freeze in the nascent relations between Israel and Tunisia, Said Ben Mustapha, the Tunisian minister of state for foreign affairs, visited the Gaza Strip today. He arrived via Jericho with a message for Yasir 'Arafat from the Tunisian president; however, the Tunisian minister will not visit Israel or meet with Israeli officials. Seven months ago, Shim'on Peres and his Tunisian counterpart shook hands in front of the cameras in Washington and announced their intention to open interest offices in both countries. Since then, nothing has happened.

At the time, the Casablanca summit in Morocco appeared to mark the realization of Shim'on Peres' great dream for a new Middle East. Today, the spirit of Casablanca seems to have evaporated. Qatar has called off a planned visit by the Israeli foreign minister. Oman, which received Prime Minister Rabin in the past with much pomp and ceremony, is now seeking to postpone the inauguration of the joint interest offices and has canceled a trip by a large Israeli economic delegation. This, while hosting an economic delegation from Iran this week.

What happened to the new Middle East envisioned by Shim'on Peres? Iran is exerting heavy pressure, especially on Oman and Qatar. Saudi Arabia has threatened sanctions and boycotts. Egypt, angered by Israel's many initiatives, is trying to disrupt and undermine any developments. Meanwhile to compound things, the United States has closed its coffers and clarified that good relations with Israel do not guarantee an open checkbook. In Israel itself, even Yitzhaq Rabin has admitted that the declarations about a new Middle East aroused old fears among the Arabs about the international Jewish conspiracy to take over their countries. A new Middle East? Not here. [end recording]

PRC 'Pressure' Causes Cancellation of Taiwan Deals

TA1804114095 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 18 Apr 95 p 7

[Report by Arye Egozi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Chinese pressure has caused Israel to avoid carrying out many deals with the Taiwanese defense industries.

Israel is showing great consideration for the PRC's position, although the latter totally ignores Israel's fears and does not hesitate to supply sophisticated nuclear and long-range missile technology to Iran. Israeli industrialists claim that this situation must immediately change.

The pro-Chinese and anti-Taiwanese policy is being spearheaded mainly by the Israeli Foreign Ministry. This office even caused the cancellation of a visit by the Taiwanese president early this month, thereby exacerbating the tense relations between the two countries.

The Foreign Ministry's position has resulted in the cancellation of an Israel Aircraft Industries [IAI] plan to establish an aircraft maintenance center in Taiwan. This $160 million project was supposed to involve both the IAI and its Taiwanese counterpart.

The IAI is also negotiating with Taiwanese Airlines a deal involving the transformation of two 747 passenger airliners into cargo planes, but the negotiations have not born any fruit, and the cancellation of President Li Teng-hui's visit does not help matters.

The Taiwanese keep reiterating that they intend to hand out large orders in various spheres to Israeli industries, but that they will not do so as long as Israel continues surrendering to China's dictates.

It should be noted that contrary to Israel, Western countries do not hurry to accept China's pressure. The United States and France have not hesitated to sell Taiwan jet fighters, whereas Israel—in the wake of PRC pressure—has shown great hesitation on whether to sell it Kfir jets. Due to this hesitation the deal was finally canceled.

Bomb Threat at Jordanian Embassy in Tel Aviv

JN1704173595 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 17 Apr 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-MAJD has learned that the Jordanian Embassy in Tel Aviv received a telephone call last week from an anonymous speaker who said that there was a timebomb inside the embassy, which is located in a suite at the Dan Hotel.

AL-MAJD sources in occupied Palestine have said that the Jordanian Embassy's staff cleared the building immediately and that an Israeli team of explosives' experts searched the embassy closely but found nothing.

Military Court Sentences 'Terrorist' to Life in Jail

TA1904145595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Nabulus military court has imposed a life term on the terrorist who murdered Yoram Skuri, a resident of Qiryat Netafim, 10 months ago. The terrorist, Mansur Rayhan, a resident of the village of Qarawat Bani Hasan, broke into the Skuri home in Qiryat Netafim and stabbed the couple with a knife. Yoram Skuri died several days later, but his wife recovered.

Syria Seen Backing Hamas To Embarrass 'Arafat

TA1404130595 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 14 Apr p 10

[Article by Pinhas Inbari: "Israelis Are Victims in Hamas-Syria Bid To Dump 'Arafat"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There is an unseen line connecting the current wave of Islamic terrorism against Israelis in Gaza and the failure of US diplomacy to push the mired negotiations between Syria and Israel ahead.

The leaders of the two terrorist wings of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad, Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq and Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, are in Damascus. There is no real difference between the aims of their activities and Hizballah's in southern Lebanon. The latter's financial support may arrive from Tehran, but it acts for Syrian interests in Lebanon. Hamas fills this role in Gaza and the territories.

To understand this connection, oN? must first understand the real motives of Syrian policy and the differences inside the Hamas movement which lead its terrorist wing, the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, to ally itself with the Syrian secular-leftist regime.

Israeli policymakers, and probably their American counterparts, seem to misunderstand Hafiz al-Asad's psychology. They concentrate on the Golan issue, while he considers Syria's role as a leader among the Arab nations much more pertinent. It is not only having the whole Golan back which is important to him, but the way he will regain it. Al-Asad is refusing even to seriously negotiate on the Golan, as long as he has to accept the principles on which Israel and its other Arab partners agree on: the Camp David accords, the Israel-Jordan peace treaty, and, most of all, the Oslo agreement.

Al-Asad's dispute with Egypt and Jordan, focusing mainly on their having made separate peace agreements with Israel, is kept within reasonable bounds and does not stop him from maintaining contact with President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn. But he finds the Oslo agreement intolerable, both because it was achieved through a secret channel and because it stipulates a partial Israeli withdrawal in the territories and limited self-rule for the Palestinians.

There is no way al-Asad will enter serious negotiations with Israel as long as Israel sticks with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat. He will not participate in a peace process in which 'Arafat plays a major role.

Even before the Oslo agreement was signed, al-Asad refused to be where 'Arafat was present. On several occasions, Mubarak had to ask the PLO leader to leave Cairo so he could receive al-Asad there.

Through escallating terrorism in Gaza, the Syrian leader is now trying to sidetrack 'Arafat, to enable Damascus to make a true entrance into the peace process. Al-Asad is not only bothered by 'Arafat as a person but by the fact that Syria would have to negotiate according to principles laid down with 'Arafat's agreement in Oslo. Al-Asad will be ready to join the peace convoy, it seems, only after the collapse of 'Arafat and the Oslo agreement.

This is the point of the recent meeting between al-Asad and the terrorist wing of Hamas, led by the head of Hamas's politburo, Dr. Abu-Marzuq. To understand this, Hamas's internal dispute should be examined.

There are two major camps now inside the fundamentalist movement. The first is the "inside leadership" (the leaders in Israeli controlled areas), symbolized by its jailed leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin.

It tacitly supports 'Arafat and actually accepts the appointments made by the Palestinian Authority [PA]. The prominent leader of this group in the West Bank is Shaykh Hamid Bitawi of Nabulus, currently the president of the Shari'ah courts of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank.

The inside leadership's strategy is to leave the job of negotiating with the Israelis to 'Arafat, while it takes control of powerful positions through the PA. This wing is therefore interested in keeping 'Arafat as a cover for its penetration of the new Palestinian administration; it has no military apparatus, and it does not engage in terrorism. This wing also opposes any contact with "red" Syria, for ideological considerations.

On the opposite side of the Hamas spectrum stands Abu-Marzuq, the founder of the military wing, the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam brigades. He has allied himself with Syria, and through terrorism he wants to topple 'Arafat and the Oslo agreement.

An interview given by one of his followers in Gaza, Shaykh Ahmad Bahr, to the Jerusalem pro-Syrian weekly

AL-UMMA a few days before the Bet Lid attack, sheds light on Abu-Marzuq's state of mind.

Bahr made two statements which seem to contradict each other, but do not: first, there is no religious prohibition to having a dialogue with Israel or the Israeli government, if it is based on granting the Palestinians their rights. However, he predicted—and said he supported—escalating terrorism against Israel.

The line of this wing is evident now: to topple 'Arafat through terrorism, with the aim of taking his place at the negotiating table with Israel. By referring to Israel by its name, Bahr in effect recognizes it.

An entirely contrary position was expressed in a religious decree published September 19 by the "League of Palestine Wise Men" led by Shaykh Bitawi, forbidding any kind of negotiations with "the Jews who conquered Palestine."

The decree stated that Islam does not recognize agreements with Jews. Yet the decree raises the possibility of something short of peace—a cease-fire—with the Jews. To help 'Arafat, this wing wished to stop terrorism and, in order to leave the PLO leader alone in the front line of the talks, they refuse to recognize Israel.

Commentary Sees No Need for Rush in Peace Process

TA1704040995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Apr 95 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "It Is Not That Good, But It Is Not That Bad Either"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The government need not decide to suspend the negotiations with the Palestinians, as President Weizman suggested. If the heinous terror continues, the talks will stop of their own volition until the Palestinians put their house in order. After all, peace is made to end war, not to have more casualties.

A halt in the negotiations is not essential, but if it happens it will not be the end of the world and certainly not a catastrophe. Suspending talks is an integral part of every negotiating process, and there is no need to get particularly worked up about it. I do not see President al-Asad losing sleep over the fact that he has been halting talks more than holding them. Israel is the only country in the world that has been at war for almost 50 years. The conflict in our region is 70 years old, and if a solution to all the problems takes a few more years, it is not that good but it is not that bad either. And, we had better tell ourselves not to get all worked up if peace with the Palestinians does not break out next Tuesday at 1830. There is no rush. Patience and forbearance will ultimately pay off.

The impatient and panic-stricken, particularly in the left-wing camp, are trying to intimidate us that if no breakthroughs are made with the Palestinians and Syria by the end of the year it will be a real calamity, if not a tragic mistake. Their main argument is based on the premise that if the Likud rises to power all will be lost. Panic, however, is no better than demagoguery. First of all, the Likud need not and is not sure to rise to power. If Labor is wise enough to post a new and young leadership in 1996, we may be in for a surprise. But even if the Likud has the chance to rise to power, Syria and 'Arafat do not look particularly worried or in a rush to make the compromises required of them to do business with the current government.

The reason may lie in the fact that Yitzhaq Rabin is not much of the dove and leader he appears to be. An old-time Laborite through and through, a prestate warrior who has not yet stopped treating the Arabs as wogs—I cannot see Rabin descending from the Golan Heights, giving the West Bank to the Palestinians, or removing the settlements in one fell swoop. Not just because his stomach will not let him do it, but also because he does not have the required majority in his own party to do what Beilin and Sarid would like to do. Rabin is an optical illusion: He is neither a dove nor a leader.

Contrary to all apocalyptic predictions, the Likud under Bibi Netanyahu will have no choice but to pursue the political process from the point where Rabin left off. We will yet see Bibi and Yasir negotiating—this, because the Likud has no alternative solutions to halting the negotiations and continuing to rule in the territories. What can it do, send helicopters to bomb the centers of Gaza? enjoying broad parliamentary support—of Labor and its partners—such as Begin had to make the necessary concessions. Even the Likud will not be able to stop the peace process. Perhaps that is why it makes no difference to al-Asad whether he deals with Rabin or with Bibi.

Past experience shows that time does not necessarily run against us or against peace. On the contrary, it got the Arab world used to our existence here. It convinced them that our physical eradication was an impossible task and ultimately persuaded them that a dialogue and reconciliation with Israel was inevitable. By the same token, it took Israel decades to understand that it could not live only by the sword in the heart of the Arab world. Time worked in favor of reconciliation and coexistence.

Richard Haass, an NSA Middle East expert in the Bush administration and a good friend of Dennis Ross and Martin Indyk, was one of the authors of "the theory of maturity," whereby things will happen when they can happen, based on the internal conviction of the parties to the conflict and not because of external pressure on one of the sides, and sometimes things must get worse before they start getting better.

His theory was not exactly embraced by Bush, but it has proved itself. Peace between Egypt and Israel matured after the Yom Kippur War. Could there have been peace without that war? Long afterward Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinians, and Israel reached the conclusion that there was no alternative other than reconciliation, but not before they experienced the Lebanon war and the intifadah. The time factor is vital, but not crucial. The negotiations should not be terminated, but neither should we be in any rush, as Rabin proposes. Whatever is not attained now will be attained at a later stage. Perhaps not before on both sides young leaders rise to power who will not constantly have the Holocaust in front of their eyes and who will not remember the wounds of past wars at every juncture in the negotiations.

The region is undergoing an era of dialogue, but the argument now is about the price, to paraphrase George Bernard Shaw. The panic about time running out is totally unnecessary, since everybody has set out upon a path from which there is no return.

Editorial: Time Not Right for Iraq Reconciliation

TA1704133795 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Apr 95 p B1

[Editorial: "Do Not Rush to Iraq"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The report that Madeleine Albright, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, will be visiting Israel in two weeks and that the treatment of Iraq will be at the center of her discussions with the prime minister and the foreign minister might sound surprising. After all, if there is one country, besides Kuwait, that has every reason to support the UN sanctions imposed on Iraq following the Gulf war, it is Israel.

In deciding to allow Iraq to sell $2-billion worth of oil over the next six months, the UN Security Council [UNSC] made a considerable exception to the embargo on Iraqi oil exports. There seems to be room here for the question whether this exception does not run counter to the United States' primary goal: to overthrow Saddam Husayn or have him overthrown. The money that will be pouring into the Iraqi coffers will improve the supply of essential goods to the civilian population of that country, if the UN supervisors manage to prevent it from being used for other purposes.

Nevertheless, the United States and Britain were looking for ways to detract from the force of the argument that the embargo on Iraqi oil exports actually harms the civilian population more than it affects the Iraqi leader and his administration. The willingness to allow the sale of a limited amount of oil for a limited period of time was a price the two had to pay to the three other UNSC members—France, Russia, and China—to secure their continued support for the bulk of the sanctions, including the supervision of all the installations that are suspected of being designed to produce nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

The U.S. Administration expects all its allies to support its policy toward Iraq, and Albright will tell Yitzhaq Rabin and Shim'on Peres as much. At the same time, she will make an effort to allay the Israeli leadership's fears and tell them that this restricted authorization to sell oil is not to be interpreted as forecasting a softening of the tough stand regarding Iraq in general and Saddam in particular.

Some Israelis doubt the efficiency of the sanctions, and not without reason. Others believe Iraq ought to be incorporated in the peace process, which will not be complete as long as Iraq remains outside it.

This line of thought may be tempting. And yet, while Jordan would probably welcome a Jerusalem-Baghdad rapprochement, all the other Arab countries that were involved in the Gulf war—including Saudi Arabia and the emirates along the Indian Ocean—would fail to understand and even fault such an initiative. Furthermore, the United States and Britain would ask Israel why it is trying to crack the wall of the international boycott on Saddam Husayn.

Iraq is an integral part of the Middle East and, although it has always been Israel's enemy, the idea of incorporating it in the diplomatic process launched at the Madrid Conference should not be rejected. At the same time, the Israeli initiative will have to wait for the right time, which will come only after Rolf Ekeus and his team determine that Iraq is not expected to pose a nuclear, chemical, or biological threat.

Israel must not encourage the Iraqi regime. That regime may be cultivating the hope that, through a dialogue with Israel, it will succeed in bringing down the wall of UN sanctions. The Israeli Government had better concentrate its efforts on the Palestinian and Syrian tracks. Iraq's turn will come later, not before.

Court Discloses Case of Soviet Spy Caught in 1988

TA1904113695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Supreme Court has allowed an espionage affair involving a Soviet spy to be made public. The spy operated in Israel for 15 years before he was caught and sentenced to 13 years in prison. The man in question is Gregoriy Londin, an engineer by profession, who was recruited by the KGB in the Soviet Union to work as a secret agent and who immigrated to Israel 22 years ago, bringing technical equipment with him. He spied for the Soviets for 15 years and received money from them in exchange for the information he relayed. Londin was caught in 1988 and sentenced to 13 years in prison, after being convicted of espionage and contact with a foreign agent. He appealed to the Supreme Court, but his appeal was turned down. Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that Londin's case is similar to two other cases made public in the past: those of Shabtay Kalmanovich and Roman Weissfeld.

Spanish Reportage on Beilin Visit

WA1904131295

For Spanish reportage on the visit to Spain by Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, see the Spain section of the 18 April West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

King Briefs Cabinet on U.S., France Trips

JN1804202195 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn paid a visit to the Prime Ministry this afternoon. His majesty was received by Prime Minister Zayd Bin-Shakir and the prime minister's deputies, the minister of education and the minister of information. His majesty met with the prime minister in his office, after which his majesty chaired the Council of Ministers' session. His majesty was briefed on developments in various fields and on the measures the government is taking and the plans it is implementing—plans related to economic, social, and educational issues, which are part of Jordan's march of progress—along solid bases to realize the homeland's prosperity so that it can serve as a distinguished cultural model in the region and the world. His majesty thanked the government for its efforts in the various fields. His majesty gave directives on various issues.

His majesty expressed satisfaction with the results of his visit to France and the United States. He said this visit and the meetings that were held with economic and intellectual leaders represent an honoring of Jordan and its steadfastness, democratic process, and compliance with defending the causes of man's freedom, justice, and peace.

His majesty said these visits stressed bilateral cooperation and upgrading coordination in all areas. He said the visit resulted in a clear understanding of the Jordanian stand and of our prospects for a future characterized by production, progress, and welfare. He said this makes Jordan a distinguished country, causing it to do its utmost for the sake of its nation's interests and defending its causes and future of its generations.

In his directives to the Council of Ministers, his majesty stressed the need to remain alert to deal with incidents that harm the national, Jordanian fabric and the Jordanian democratic process. He noted that eagerness to protect Jordanian achievements is basic and requires the highest degree of cohesion, fraternity, and caution.

His majesty said: Any manifestations of bigotry and rumors among people should be curbed and all cracks—through which those who do not adhere to the homeland's higher interests and refuse to abide by our values, Constitution, charter, and the sovereignty of our laws make their way—should be closed.

His majesty said professional associations should adhere to their traditional tasks in order to upgrade professions. He said that differences among any Jordanian sectors or social forces should not override the public interest. He said that the minority should not impose its opinion on the majority which represents a comprehensive perspective and builds and works for the sake of all citizens. He added that our major concern is Jordan's security and stability and struggle for its right to a free and dignified life.

He stressed the importance of protecting the Jordanian press from certain negative phenomena that emerged in a manner that would harm the homeland's image, the integrity of its people, and its relations with its brethren. His majesty said: We should not allow those who aim to frustrate our endeavors to infiltrate our ranks and obstruct the march of progress—a march Jordanians seek to make reach its national and pan-Arab goals and usher in a future where our hopes of progress and growth are realized so that Jordan can continue its march for the sake of its future in fulfillment of its principles and in recognition of its nation.

His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir welcomed His Majesty King Husayn and expressed on his behalf and on behalf of his colleagues his deep appreciation for the royal directives—directives on which our people base their vision and via which they work and make efforts under the wise leadership of King Husayn.

His majesty was also briefed by a number of ministers on issues in the areas of telecommunications, industry, trade, economic and financial conditions, municipal elections, and regulations related to administrative divisions, elections, traffic, and development plans for the forthcoming stage.

Al-Sharif Meets Officials on University 'Incidents'

JN1404062295 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0430 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir has stressed on the need to preserve the security, stability, and unity of Jordan in a spirit of brotherhood and harmony.

During two separate meetings attended by the notables and members of Parliament from the al-Balqa' Governorate in addition to notables and members of Parliament from the Chechen and Circassians to discuss the latest sorrowful incidents at the University of Jordan held at the Prime Ministry, the Prime Minister called on the students to overcome such incidents and work towards building modern Jordan.

The prime minister also pointed out that the government will take all necessary steps to guarantee the application of law. Al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir asserted that the government will follow up on what measures were taken inside and outside the university in implementing the law in order to keep the national binding strong as was entrenched by the leadership of his majesty the king.

The prime minister asserted that the security, stability, and unity of the nation are basics which no one will be allowed to mess with.

The two meetings were attended by the speakers of Parliament and several members of the Upper House of Parliament.

Committee To Investigate Matters

JN1504164395 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1600 GMT 15 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The minister of justice has decided to form a committee to investigate the recent incidents at the University of Jordan and any other matters related to them.

The Suwaylih prosecutor general, as the incidents at the University fall within his jurisdiction, will head the committee.

Minister Returns From Bahrain, Comments on Trade

JN1804142895 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minister of Industry and Trade 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib has returned home after an official visit to Bahrain. During his three-day stay there, Mr. Abu-al-Raghib held talks with officials on promoting bilateral trade cooperation. He also signed a bilateral trade protocol designed to organize trade relations between 'Amman and Manama.

The minister gave Radio Jordan further details on the outcome of his trip to the Arab Gulf islands.

[Begin Abu-al-Raghib recording] An agreement was signed yesterday between Jordan and Bahrain where all economic and trade issues were discussed and agreed upon. The most important effect of this agreement is that a free trade area was established between Jordan and Bahrain where all products and goods will be exported and imported to the two countries without any customs or tariffs.

We really feel that this is a very important agreement. It will give the Jordanian products a good leeway in the Gulf area and at the same time it will help us to promote our trade and our various economic sectors in the Gulf region.

Further to the trade, we discussed matters related to transportation, to agricultural issues, and to financial issues, and to the labor force. We felt that there are excellent opportunities for the Jordanians to work in the Gulf areas through Bahrain and we believe that the relationship between Jordan and Bahrain is the best standard. We feel it will be promoted in such a manner that will reflect positively on the private sector and on all various issues. [end recording]

Columnist Views Attitude of Palestinian Authority

JN1504100595 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 15 Apr 95 p 28

[From the "Every Day" column by Tariq Masariwah: "We Do Not Like To Believe"]

[FBIS Translated Text] No one knows what difference it makes to the self-rule authority whether the Hamas headquarters is based in Jordan, Gaza, or even China as long as this authority is facing a problem with Hamas and with all Palestinian organizations and parties?

In other words, what will the Palestinian Authority [PA] gain by giving Israel or the United States an excuse to blackmail Jordan, assuming, of course, that Washington or Tel Aviv do not know the location of the Hamas headquarters?

Also, why is the self-rule authority irritated by the presence of [Hamas Spokesman Ibrahim] Ghawshah in Amman? The self-rule authority accuses Jordan of harboring Hamas leaders, but does not have the courage to direct accusations against Damascus, for example, for harboring the Islamic Jihad leaders, and it is common knowledge that [Jihad Leader Ibrahim] al-Shaqaqi is stationed in Damascus.

One more question: Why should Jordan be bothered if a pilgrim from Umm al-Fahm carries a Palestinian, Chinese, or Indian passport, as long as Jordan is not harmed by the arrival of these pilgrims to the Hijaz and their return to their home towns?

The question is: What will the Palestinian Authority gain from any Jordanian-Saudi conflict, or a Jordanian-Belgian conflict?

We do not like to believe that the self-rule authority has all this free time to start setting traps that cannot be sustained. That authority yesterday entered into talks with Hamas leaders, not here in Amman but in Gaza, and agreed with them on a written statement that was issued in Gaza and not Amman. Also, the Palestinian passports that were on their way to Amman were confiscated, because, it seems, the Israeli police has not yet approved their distribution.

We do not like to believe that the Palestinian Authority is interested in all that. Jordan is eager to have relations that rise to the level of the authority's responsibility. We are not now dealing as a state and organizations, for the Authority will become a state, and it would not be in its interest to turn the ties of good neighborliness into complicated relations based on suspicions, sweet words, and hugging and kissing in front of television cameras. Anyone can do that, but it is only the serious and responsible action that will benefit everybody.

Buwayz, Christopher Discuss Peace, NPT

NC1904075095 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has stressed that any breakthrough on the Syrian track would positively reflect on the Lebanese track. Christopher's remarks were made during his meeting with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz in New York yesterday on the sidelines of the conference on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT].

In his remarks, Christopher called for stabilizing the situation in the south. He cautioned against the repercussions from the situation in southern Lebanon on the peace process.

New York reports said that the two ministers discussed the situation in the south, including the Israeli attacks, the naval blockade, and the Lebanese detainees in the Israeli prisons. Christopher maintained that Washington is watching the situation closely.

For his part, Buwayz urged Washington to make extra efforts to control the situation in the south. He said that Israel is using the south to vent its unjustified political frustration. The talks between Buwayz and Christopher also touched on the NPT. Christopher said that the approval of the unconditional and unlimited extension could encourage countries like Israel to join the treaty at a later date. Buwayz, however, noted that it is inconceivable that Lebanon be asked to adopt this stand while Israel refuses to join the NPT at a time when it possesses a nuclear plant 60 km from Lebanon.

Prime Minister Briefs President on Damascus Talks

NC1804140795 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has briefed President Ilyas al-Hirawi on the results of his visit to Damascus. They also reviewed the latest developments.

Meanwhile, al-Hariri stressed that the end of the presidential term is linked with consultations at the Chamber of Deputies, which speaker Birri will hold with various deputies. He said he cannot say whether or not the president's term in office will be extended before the consultations are over.

Regarding reports on a cabinet reshuffle, al-Hariri denied that there is an intention to reshuffle or alter the cabinet, stressing that we are at the end of the presidential term.

Israel Frees, Deports Jordanians to Lebanon

NC1804114695 Paris AFP in English 0950 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] al-Naqurah, Lebanon, April 18 (AFP)—Israel has freed two Jordanians who spent up to 25 years in jail and deported them to south Lebanon, a UN force in the area said Tuesday [18 April].

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said Muhammad al-Julani, 27, and Khamis Khadr, 58, were released on Monday.

Al-Julani was jailed in 1983 for infiltrating Israel from Jordan while Khadr had been in Israeli jail since 1970, a UNIFIL spokesman said, without giving details of the latter's arrest.

They were driven in an Israeli army jeep to the al-Hamra' crossing, near the port city of Tyre, between the Israeli-occupied zone of south Lebanon and the rest of the country.

They walked five kilometres (three miles) to a Lebanese army checkpoint but were turned back. UNIFIL took charge of the men on their return and has contacted the Red Cross to help organize their return to Jordan.

On Friday, Israeli troops shot dead an 18-year-old Jordanian man who tried to infiltrate the occupied West Bank from Jordan. Israeli radio said the man was unarmed, and was only carrying a Koran—the Moslem holy book.

Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in October.

UNIFIL Takes in Jordanians

NC1804123095 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel today resorted to the fashion of deporting people to south Lebanon. A UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] source announced that Israel yesterday released two Jordanian nationals, one of whom had served 25 years and the other 12 years in Israeli jails. The Israeli forces transported them to south Lebanon after their release.

The Jordanian nationals have been identified as Muhammad al- Julani, who was originally detained in 1983, and Khamis Khudr, who was arrested in 1970.

An Israeli jeep transported the two Jordanians to the al-Hamra' crossing point after which they travelled for 5 km on foot before reaching a Lebanese Army checkpoint. The Lebanese Army returned them to the occupied area in the south.

UNIFIL has taken in the two Jordanians and contacted the International Committee of the Red Cross to discuss how they can be returned to Jordan.

UNIFIL To Withdraw Officers Attending Exercises

NC1704124495 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] command in the south has put an end to the reverberations of the participation of international officers in joint Israeli-South Lebanese Army [SLA] exercises. UNIFIL spokesman Timor Goksel said today that the UNIFIL command has decided to withdraw the officers who attended the exercises from Lebanon. UNIFIL officers last Tuesday [11 April] attended military maneuvers by the Israeli army with the participation of Lahd units. Lebanese officials condemned this behavior and saw it as a legitimization of the Israeli occupation and an attempt to overstep Security Council Resolution 425, which calls on the Israeli forces to withdraw from the south without any conditions or restrictions.

Islamic Amal's al-Musawi: UN Takes Orders From U.S.

NC1904071395 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamic Amal official Husayn al-Musawi has stated that the reason for the presence of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] in south Lebanon was and still is to monitor and control the resistance activity against the Zionist occupation. He rejected this presence, which he said is harmful to us and serves the interests of our enemy. He noted that the UN and its Secretary General Butrus-Ghali take orders from the United States.

Speaking at a Koranic lecture, al-Musawi stated that it should not be surprising for UN officers to attend the al-Majidiyah exercises [grouping Israeli and South Lebanese Army troops]. He added: It makes no difference if [UNIFIL spokesman] Goksel apologizes or not. He pointed out that America is trying to sabotage all that we have built and worked for and it has a problem today with those who have pride and courage involved in the Islamic Resistance and the intifadah.

He noted that the Zionists are upset by President Hafiz al-Asad's steadfastness, determination, and support for the resistance fighters in Palestine and Lebanon, adding that the Syrian president is not in a hurry in the negotiations because be believes in his people and cause.

Militia Threat To Broaden Shelling Reported

NC1904071495 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a move that portends serious criminal intentions, the agents' militia [South Lebanese Army] has threatened to broaden the scope of artillery bombardment to include all southern areas and as far as Beirut. The agents linked this step to what they claimed to be the continued bombardment of Marj 'Uyun and Jazzin. However, this in itself is enough to indicate the hostile intentions of the Zionists and their agents. As is known, the resistance did not shell civilian areas in those two towns but targeted positions of the occupation and its agents. However, the Zionists are threatening to shell civilian areas throughout Lebanon if operations targeting the enemy positions continue.

Sources who follow up the situation say that the threat is a clear admission of the magnitude of losses incurred by the Zionists and their agents as a result of the resistance operations. The same sources emphasize that any recklessness by the enemies will not pass without a harsh punishment. The sources add that everything will be possible in response to any Zionist aggression.

Two Palestinian Opponents of Peace Process Said Killed

NC1804141695 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1330 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian sources have disclosed that two unidentified gunmen believed to be members of the pro-'Arafat Fatah hurled a grenade at a checkpoint manned by supporters of Munir Maqdah, who is opposed to the Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement, in 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp [near Sidon] last night, leaving two of the checkpoint personnel dead. These sources said a 30-minute clash involving the use of light weapons ensued between the assailants and the checkpoint personnel. It should be recalled that Maqdah said last week that he trained 40 personnel to embark on suicidal attacks against Israeli targets.

Russian Envoy Plans for Parliamentarians' Visit

NC1804124595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri met today with Russian Ambassador Gennadiy Ilichev who announced that they discussed a visit that a Russian parliamentary delegation will make to Lebanon on 16-21 May. The visit will be part of a tour that will also include Syria and Jordan.

The Russian ambassador voiced hope that the delegation's visit will help develop the traditional ties between Russian and Lebanese legislative bodies.

He declared that his country is involved in the peace process and is working in concert with the U.S. sponsor, the parties immediately concerned with the peace process, and other regional players. [passage omitted]

Peres Proposal Called 'New Israeli Maneuver'

JN1804133495 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Apr 95

[Report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] Reacting to Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' recent statements on changing negotiating procedures on the Syrian track, a senior Syrian source has told Radio Monte Carlo that Peres' proposal is a new Israeli maneuver to circumvent the implementation of the international legitimacy resolutions calling for full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territory. The source noted that Israel's commitment to full withdrawal from the Golan and the achievement of parallel [mutawazi] and equal [mutasawiyah] security arrangements are the bases of any progress in the peace process, as well as the key to the resumption of talks between both countries' chiefs of staff.

Syrian sources noted recently that pressure is being put on Syria to accept the Israeli way of making peace. The sources said that Syria will only make peace in accordance with its principles, which are based on the international resolutions, no matter how strong these pressures are.

Press Rejects Peres Proposal

JN1904084995 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 19 Apr 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "A New Israeli Attempt to Undermine Peace Efforts," AL-BA'TH discusses the Israeli attempts to evade the peace process.

The paper says: In an attempt to avoid blame for the stalemate, Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres came up with the idea of readjusting the procedures of negotiations with Syria, and reiterated Prime Minister Rabin's proposal to raise the level of these negotiations. The least that can be said about this trick is that it is an attempt to undermine the peace process. Four years have passed since this process started and Israel is still refusing to abide by the principles on which it was based. These principles are basically based on the international legitimacy and the UN resolutions that stipulate a complete and full Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and the recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights to establish their independent state on their national soil.

AL-BA'TH adds: Israel's rejection of the peace process is represented in the series of obstacles it places on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. It is also represented in two feeble agreements that cannot survive because of the Israeli conditions that were imposed on the self-rule authority and Jordan, and because the two parties accepted these conditions, which means that the agreed to peace the Israeli way.

AL-BA'TH adds: Syria has offered several proofs of its seriousness about achieving a just and comprehensive peace. The world can now see very clearly that great gap between the positions of Israel, which rejects peace and sticks to its incomplete peace, and those of Syria, which seeks to achieve justice and peace. Peres' attempts and suspect calls to reschedule negotiations, or so he claims, will not succeed.

AL-BA'TH concludes by saying: These claims aim at circumventing the peace process and its principles and the efforts exerted by the U.S. diplomacy to achieve a tangible progress in that process.

TISHRIN says Shim'on Peres' recent statements constitute a new Israeli maneuver and do not offer anything new to the Israeli position. The paper says: The Israelis' concern about formalities and wrangles has, undoubtedly, distanced the peace process from its objective and goals and pushed it to a stalemate. If Israel responded favorably from the beginning to the substantive issues, the peace process would not have reached the current stage of stumbling and setback.

TISHRIN adds: Through these proposals, Peres is not revealing that Israel has formulated a new position that would end the dilemma of the peace process with Syria. Instead, he attempts to circumvent once again the principles of the peace process as specified by the resolutions of international legitimacy, particularly Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

TISHRIN adds: This strengthens the conviction that with this new maneuver, whose arrangements were proposed by Peres, Israel is still avoiding the principle on which the peace process was based; namely, the return of land in exchange for peace, and the equitability [takafu'] and balance [tawazun] of the security arrangements in a reciprocal [mutabadal] and equal [mutasawi] way on the two sides of the 4 June borderline.

Under the headline "Just Peace and Secrecy Do Not meet," AL-THAWRAH stresses that Syria seeks a very clear peace, with dimensions based on the substance of justice and comprehensiveness, which must guarantee the return the occupied Golan Heights and southern Lebanon. That peace must also guarantee the Israeli troops' withdrawal, the dismantling of settlements, and the withdrawal of settlers to the 4 June 1967 borderline. It must also preserve the dignity of all parties and realize the interests of all parties on the basis of justice, balance [tawazun], equitability [takafu'], and reciprocity [taqabul] particularly in the issue of security arrangements, which Israel is raising as a point of argument, forgetting or pretending to forget that Resolution 242 calls for secure borders to all parties and not Israel alone, which seeks to obtain both peace and territory under the false claims of security.

AL-THAWRAH says: When secret talks and security arrangements are proposed according to the bizarre

Israeli concept, we cannot be assured about the intentions of Israel, which every now and then uses new pretexts to obstruct progress and waste time, and at the same time accuse Syria of obstructing progress and wasting time.

Daily on Israeli 'Secret Negotiations' Proposal

JN1604061495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 16 Apr 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-BA'TH comments on the statements that came out of Israel in the wake of Dennis Ross's tour of the region. These statements showed the constantly intransigent Israeli attitude toward the peace efforts and Israel's refusal to submit to the resolutions of international legitimacy. These statements also reflect a new attempt to return to square one. The purpose of this is to destroy any hopes of progress in the peace efforts and of breaking the deadlock in the peace process.

AL-BA'TH adds: After its failure to impose conditions for the security arrangements, Israel has once again proposed, through its president, secret negotiations. Israel focused on this proposal in the past, to no avail. This time, Israel suggests it again to confirm that it still obstructs peace efforts.

Israel should know that Syria has clearly and openly said it is waging a battle for peace to attain peace of the brave. Syria is waging this battle in the open in the name of the masses of the nation. This is because the policy of the Corrective Movement was originally based on clarity, which means mutual and absolute trust between the leader and the people.

TISHRIN comments on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, which portends civil war. Things are getting more complicated and bleak, because the Oslo accord has caused serious violations of the national and pan-Arab rights of the Palestinian people. This is also because of the submission of the self-rule authority to Israeli conditions and pressures and because of the arbitrary measures carried out by this authority.

Israeli Stand on Security Arrangements Criticized

JN1504102895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 15 Apr 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper TISHRIN comments on the Israeli intransigence in light of the Israeli prime minister's rejection of any discussion of balanced [mutawazinah] and equitable [mutakafi'ah] security arrangements with Syria.

TISHRIN stresses that Syria is not ready to relinquish its territory and that of fraternal Lebanon, or to accept any formula lacking the principle of balance [tawazun] and equitability [takafu'].

TISHRIN says: The UN Security Council resolutions, to which Syria adheres, call for Israel's full withdrawal to the 4-June 1967 lines and for eliminating all traces of aggression. Syria has agreed on the principle of security arrangements, providing they are equitable and balanced, in order to make the U.S. efforts succeed and to push the peace process forward. On this basis, it accepted to resume the Washington talks under the auspices of the United States, and with its participation.

TISHRIN adds: However, the Israeli stand did not change at all. The statement made by Rabin yesterday proved that Israel is not serious about the peace process, and that it is capitalizing on this process in order to achieve the objectives of expansion and hegemony. The time factor is undoubtedly narrowing. Israel is wasting both time and effort, and places obstacles before any prospect of making progress. Peace cannot be established on the bases of occupation and hegemony, but on the bases of justice and fairness [insaf] and the restoration of each side's rights. The Golan has been Syrian territory since time immemorial. There is no alternative at all to restoring the Golan in full to the motherland and to Israel's withdrawal to the 4-June 1967 line. If the security arrangements are meant to bolster peace prospects, then these arrangements should be balanced and equitable in a way that safeguards both sovereignty and dignity.

In a commentary under the headline "The Stumbling Process," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: The peace process on the region's crisis is stumbling due to Israel's attempts to impose security concepts and to obtain privileges which are not at all in harmony with the UN Charter and the principles of international law. This is in addition to the fact that they contravene the UN Security Council resolutions on whose bases the peace conference was held in Madrid.

AL-THAWRAH adds: It is no longer a secret to anyone that Israel's maneuverings, particularly at the talks Ross held during his recent tour of the region, and its consequent refusal to accept the principles of equality [musawah], balance, and reciprocity [taqabul] regarding the security arrangements implemented on both sides of the 4-June line, have rendered Ross's tour a disappointment. This has caused the peace process to stumble further.

AL-THAWRAH points out: Since the principles of equality and balance in the security arrangements are recognized by the international community, and that no state can ask another state in this world to relinquish these principles under any circumstances, Syria has adhered, is still adhering, and will continue to adhere to them, especially since these principles constitute a just demand and provide basic and accurate grounds to establish security arrangements between two states engaged in a state of war and which want to move to a stage of true peace.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: In order to render the efforts of the peace cosponsors fruitful, particularly the

United States' efforts, to save the peace process from its stalemate, and to push it forward toward its agreed objective; namely, just and comprehensive peace, it is necessary to stop Israel's procrastination and prevarication which prevent this process from achieving its objectives, and then to make it abide by the principles and bases of the peace process, particularly the full Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, the return to the 4-June 1967 line, and the parallel [mutawaziyah] and equal [mutasawiyah] security arrangements on both sides of this line.

Radio Says Arabs Have 'Right' Not To Sign NPT

JN1804140695 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 18 Apr 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: A United Nations conference on the extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] is being held now in New York at the level of foreign ministers. Some 187 nations are taking part in this conference. The purpose of the conference is to spare humanity the dangers of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the scourge of nuclear warfare. This is definitely a noble cause and has the support of all nations. However, the influential nations in the international community that possess nuclear weapons, have once again resorted to a double- standard policy. This has made Third World nations cast doubt on the true intentions of these influential powers.

In the Middle East, for example, Israel has declared its refusal to sign the NPT. This stand would not have been controversial had Israel not possessed a significant number of nuclear facilities and stockpiled a large amount of nuclear weapons. In addition, Israel has refused to commit itself to a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Instead of intensifying their efforts to talk Israel into signing the NPT and opening its facilities to nuclear inspection, the influential Western nations in the international community have quickly started to put pressure on other countries, such as Iran, on the pretext that Iran is conducting research on nuclear weapons. This is despite the fact that the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency has said that Iranian facilities are subject to strict control and that these facilities are confined to peaceful activities.

If we take into consideration that Israel came into possession of nuclear weapons thanks to Western technology and secret Western aid and that it is still engaged in such activities, until this very minute, then the Arab states that have responded to the peace efforts have a right to cast doubt on the intentions of Western countries and to refrain from signing the NPT.

Experts estimate that Israel possesses around 200 nuclear warheads and bombs. They also say that Israeli efforts to produce nuclear weapons are in full swing. Israel, meanwhile, continues to thwart efforts for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It has turned the peace process—which sought to establish a just and firm solution in the region on the basis of UN resolutions—into a real farce. In fact, it has made the situation in the Middle East more serious and is still pushing the Palestinian arena into a destructive explosion.

The peace process was supposed to give the Palestinian people their identity and enable them to restore their rights and devote their efforts to building their future. However, the Gaza-First agreement has become a Gaza-Last agreement. Only a few days ago, the Israeli prime minister said he supports the establishment of a Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip only, to be isolated from the rest of the occupied territories, which will remain in the grip of Israel and under the control of its army. Rabin made his offer conditional on the Palestinian Authority's ceaseless pursuit of the national forces that reject occupation. In other words, declaring real war.

Thus, instead of providing freedom for the Palestinian people and uniting all its factions to build a bright future, the peace process, under the Gaza agreement, has yielded a fragile and lame settlement that does not give any weight to the simplest rights, such the right to freedom, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state. Worse still, this settlement threatens to ignite a Palestinian civil war which Israel is pushing for, with all its capabilities.

On the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, Israel has rejected the principle of full withdrawal and return to the 4 June 1967 lines in accordance with Security Council resolutions. Israel also insists on achieving a lame settlement on these two tracks—a settlement that lacks balance and objectivity and promotes Israel's regional ambitions in waters and lands.

In brief, we can say that Israel wants shaky settlements that are far removed from the objective of a just and comprehensive peace and the UN resolutions and the U.S. assurances given to the Arab parties, especially Syria and Lebanon. No one has put any pressure on Israel to respond to the requirements of a just and comprehensive peace. Also, no one has put any pressure on it to make it sign the NPT. In fact, certain Western quarters publicly justify Israel's refusal to sign the NPT. In the meantime, weapons continue to flow to it without any control. This control is only exercised on Arab countries and other countries that do not threaten peace or possess nuclear weapons.

Israel's nuclear threat is serious and real and is worsening and becoming more serious day after day as the Tel Aviv rulers reject just peace and full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. The double-standard policy followed by the influential international parties will eventually undermine the objective of a just peace and escalate threats in the Middle East. This realization is not confined to the Arab countries; most Third World nations share this view, to cite their objection to the NPT in its present form. This issue concerns the security and peace of the entire international community.

Al-Shar' Meets Egyptian, Lebanese Counterparts

JN1904090495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New York—On the fringes of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] member states conference, currently convening at the UN Headquarters, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has met with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa. They discussed the conference agenda and the agenda set for the Nonaligned Movement conference, scheduled to open next week in Bandung, Indonesia.

Al-Shar' met last night with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz. They discussed topics on the agendas of the NPT member states' conference and the Bandung conference.

Minister Seeks To Boost Cooperation With France

BR1404125095 Paris LA TRIBUNE DESFOSSES in French 14 Apr 95 p 6

[Interview with Economy Minister Muhammad al-'Imadi by Karim Ellyas in Damascus; date not given: "Syria: We Are Turning To Countries That Are Awarding Credits"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ellyas] Why are French companies not managing to secure larger contacts in Syria?

[Al-'Imadi] Our two countries have always had excellent relations. In the late 1970's several major contracts were signed, some of which we claim were not properly honored. Consequently, we reacted by appealing to legal arbitration and freezing the repayment of loans awarded by France for the execution of the contracts under dispute. Today the French Insurance Company for Foreign Trade is not guaranteeing any loans awarded to companies dealing with Syria. So it is logical that we should decide to turn to those countries that are awarding credits.

[Ellyas] So cooperation with France is currently blocked?

[Al-'Imadi] We have asked the French Government to send a delegation with a view to smoothing over and sorting out all the problems. The French responded by proposing that we go to the Club of Paris. We are ready to negotiate, but we do not want to go to the Club of Paris because there is no question of the IMF having the right to look at the reforms we are implementing. In our eyes, France is not being sufficiently accommodating, and this is all the more damaging in the light of the fact that there are major opportunities for cooperation. Should agreement be reached on the liability in question ($135 million—LA TRIBUNE DESFOSSES editor's note), we will open our doors to French investors.

[Ellyas] What is your reform program all about?

[Al-'Imadi] It deals with gradual, typically Syrian reforms which have not been dictated by any foreign institution. Our primary objective is to develop our private sector, hence our decisions to liberalize foreign trade and offer exporters financial and fiscal incentives. The Syrian Government has also undertaken to balance the state budget. Our efforts are aimed at unifying exchange rates and implementing social measures intended to offset the effects of liberalizing prices. What is more, with the exception of the banking system, all the other industries—including the hydrocarbons and electricity industries—are being opened up to private and foreign investment.

[Ellyas] What are your reform programs' chances of success while Syria appears isolated as a result of its opposition to the peace process?

[Al-'Imadi] Syria plays a vital role where peace in the region is concerned. We are not against peace, but there is no question of Syria ceding sovereignty to satisfy Israel. We are confident in our reforms and we do not believe that the Oslo agreements could both generate peace and stimulate the economy unless our country is involved.

Joint Trade Committee With PRC Meets in Damascus

JN1904090995 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Subay'i, minister of state for planning affairs, this evening received Liu Shanzai, Chinese vice minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation, and his delegation in the presence of Dr. Tawfiq Isma'il, assistant minister of state for planning affairs.

Talks dealt with the strong relations of friendship and the aspects of bilateral economic, scientific, technical, and trade cooperation and ways to enhance them and expand their prospects in order to achieve the common interest of both countries.

Talks also dealt with the topics listed on the agenda of the first round of the Syrian-Chinese Joint Committee for Economic, Trade, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation, which will be discussed in a joint meeting.

Following the meeting, the Syrian-Chinese Joint Committee held its first round in the meetings hall at the State Planning Commission [SPC]. The Syrian side was led by Dr. Tawfiq Isma'il and the Chinese side by Mr. Liu Shanzai in the presence of representatives from the ministries of economy, industry, agriculture, construction, irrigation, transportation, and the SPC in addition to the members of the guest Chinese delegation.

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Isma'il lauded the strong bilateral relations. He also noted the aspects of economic and trade cooperation and the need to promote and consolidate this cooperation, especially since there are wide possibilities for achieving this objective, fostering the trade exchanges, and establishing joint ventures.

The head of the Chinese delegation voiced his pleasure at visiting the friendly country of Syria. He hailed the historic relations between both countries and peoples, and expressed a desire to enhance and expand the scopes of Syrian-Chinese cooperation in various economic, trade, and industrial fields.

Afterward, the conferees reviewed the economic, trade, and industrial relations and ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in these fields. They also exchanged views on ways to achieve the joint objectives as well as on available investment opportunities.

The Chinese delegation arrived in Damascus this afternoon on a visit to Syria scheduled to last four days. It was received on the Syrian-Jordanian border by the assistant minister of state for planning affairs and the Chinese ambassador in Damascus.

Afghanistan

'Large Number' Killed in New Russian Raids

LD1804173195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Russian aircraft heavily bombed a number of residential areas in Badakhshan Province of Afghanistan this morning, it was announced in Afghanistan.

A representative of [President] Borhanoddin Rabbani in Peshawar, Pakistan, announced this news, adding: Three areas in Badakhshan Province were bombed a number times from 0200 until 0600. As a result, a large number of defenseless people were killed or injured and some damage inflicted on the residential areas. [passage omitted]

Rabbani Said Not Ready To Transfer Power

LD1804174095 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Professor [Ostad] Rabbani is not ready to transfer power to an interim administration. Esteemed 'Abdol Karim Khalili, secretary general of the Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity] Party, said in an interview: Ostad Rabbani is not ready to transfer power to an interim administration, and it is clear that as long as Rabbani carries on as head of state, peace and security cannot be restored in Afghanistan. Answering a question Ostad Khalili said: The Wahdat-e Eslami will never support the disintegration of Afghanistan and will never allow anyone else to commit such a grave act. On Mahmud Mestiri's plan he said: Neither is this plan practical, nor can it solve our problems. Answering a question about the Taleban, Ostad Khalili said: The Taleban are supported by foreigners. We will not publicly mention any names but it is clear that foreign hands are behind them, and those hands were involved in the martyrdom of Ostad 'Abdol Ali Mazari, too.

India

Iranian President Rafsanjani Continues Visit

Reviews Objective of Trip

BK1804144595 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 0940 GMT 18 Apr 95

["Press Release"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The EAM [External Affairs Minister] called on President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today. The EAM said that the president's visit is a landmark event which will expand the bilateral relations between India and Iran.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that his primary objective is to expand on the bilateral relationship which reached qualitatively high level as a result of the PM's [Prime Minister's] visit to Iran in September 1993. The president said that India and Iran are today endowed with high capabilities and potentials in the technological, scientific and industrial spheres and this enables the two countries to realise vastly increased cooperation. The president emphasised that Iran attaches high value to the cooperation with India in the international arena.

The EAM said that the potentials of commercial relations can be better realised through joint ventures and the proposals for Indian participation in projects in Iran. The EAM specifically referred to the proposals under consideration in the railways sector.

The EAM said that the post Cold War era has opened up new opportunities for cooperation between the two countries. The EAM conveyed India's hope to work closely with Iran in the international forums.

Seeks Cooperation in Technology

BK1804143995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Iranian president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, has urged the developing nations to consolidate their ties and resolve their problems by themselves. He was addressing a joint session of members of parliament in the central hall of parliament this afternoon. He said regional disputes can be peacefully resolved through political dialogue and with mutual understanding. The Iranian president said his country wants to enter a new phase of scientific research and technological cooperation with India.

Earlier, welcoming the visiting president, the prime minister expressed India's desire to take bilateral relations to new heights. Mr. Narasimha Rao said India's participation in the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] is a symbol of our dedication for regional cooperation.

Speaking at a civic reception at the historic Asifi Imambara [Shiite shrine] in Lucknow earlier today, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said no one should be allowed to create hate and distrust among the Muslim community in India by arousing religious sentiments. The Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Mulayem Singh Yadav, thanked the Iranian president for extending cooperation to India in the international forums over the Kashmir issue.

The All India Shia Hussaini Fund has urged President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to pressurize the Pakistani Government to stop continued violence against Shi'ite Muslims there. A memorandum to this effect was submitted to the visiting dignitary by the secretary general of the fund, Syed Hasan Mehdi, in Lucknow.

Views Kashmir Issue

LD1804200595 Tehran IRNA in English 1816 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lucknow (India), April 18, IRNA—Visiting President of Iran Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here today told a group of Muslim ulema that the United States and world arrogance aim to weaken Islam because they view Islam as being against their illegitimate interests. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that under the circumstances the Muslim world should be united as a whole. He said divisive prejudice plagues Islam and should be done away with.

He added the issue of Kashmir should be solved by negotiations and consistent with the interests of the people living there. He said both India and Pakistan would do well to devote their full resources to their own progress and well-being. President Rafsanjani expressed hope for the finalization of a gas trunkline between Iran and India via Pakistan and said once that project is carried out the region would have peace.

The Iranian president arrived in India on Monday on a three-day official visit. Today he was in Lucknow, a city famous for its Muslim culture. In the 17th and 18th century Lucknow was the capital of the state of Oudh ruled by a Muslim dynasty of Iranian (Nishapuri) origin who were displaced by the British colonialists.

Signs 'Landmark' Trade Accord

LD1804192795 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India, Iran, and Turkmenistan today signed a landmark agreement opening Central Asia for trade with India on land routes. Five other agreements have also been signed between India and Iran on tourism, environment, telecommunication and postal services, cultural exchange, and prevention of drug trafficking. The signing of the agreement comes following official talks with the visiting president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani of Iran and the foreign minister of Turkmenistan, Mr. Shikhmuradov, in New Delhi this evening. The trilateral memorandum of understanding aims at improving trade and economic cooperation between themselves, besides increasing the flow of traffic in transit between Central Asia and India through Iran. The first ever agreement of its kind provides for the international carriage of goods by road and rail from Central Asia to Iran and then through Iran using vehicles registered in any of the three countries. It authorizes the carriers of the three countries to establish offices and representatives in their territories. It also provides for a trilateral commission to supervize the implementation of the agreement, besides expanding cooperation. The memorandum of understanding was signed by the external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, the foreign minister of Iran Dr. 'Ali Akhbar Velayati, and the Turkmenistan foreign minister Mr. Shikhmuradov. India and Iran will also take up joint ventures in the tourism sector, and a working group will draw up the details of implementation of cooperation. The other agreements will help identify areas of cooperation in postal and telecommunication services and exchange of experts. Both countries will adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to check trafficking in illicit drugs in the region.

Commentary Views Trade Accord

BK1904053395 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 19 Apr 95

[Commentary by S. Robert]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There could not have been a better outcome for the visit of President Rafsanjani of Iran to New Delhi. A history of sorts was created yesterday when India, Iran and Turkmenistan signed a trilateral agreement opening Central Asia for trade with India on land routes. The memorandum of understanding signed by the external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee; Foreign Minister of Iran Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, and the foreign minister of Turkmenistan, Mr. Shikhmuradov, has far-reaching implications not just for the three countries, but for the entire Central Asian region itself. Now, international carriage is possible by road and rail to the region through Iran and Turkmenistan.

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, transport of goods to Central Asia has been a problem. Turkmenistan has well-built roads and also good rail links to Central Asian countries. What was needed was a good rail link between the Iranian port of Bandar-e 'Abbas and Sarakhs on the Iran-Turkmenistan border. The project has already been taken up and it could be completed in a year's time. This will open up unlimited opportunities for expanding trade between Central Asia and other Asian countries. With the signing of the accord, India's exports to Central Asian Republics can reach a new high. Indian textiles, engineering goods and traditional items have a big market in the Central Asian Republics. The memorandum of understanding, MOU, provides for the institutional backup and the framework for boosting trade. It authorizes vehicles registered in any of the three countries to transport goods by road and rail from the Central Asian region to Iran and in transit through Iran to India. The carriers can establish offices and appoint representatives and agencies in their territories. Besides, it also provides for the formation of a trilateral commisison to supervise the implementation of the MOU. One of the functions of the commission is to provide opportunities for expanding cooperation in this area. This will help remove obstacles if any in the process. To make it effective, the foreign ministers of the three countries will meet within the next six months to negotiate a full-fledged treaty to establish the parameters of cooperation.

All in all, the new agreement is a landmark in the history of the region and revived the ancient trade connections of India with these countries.

Addresses News Correspondents

LD1904101695 Tehran IRNA in English 0933 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, April 19, IRNA—Visiting Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani today offered Iranian mediation to settle the Kashmir issue, while reiterating Iranian preference for a negotiated and amicable settlement of the dispute among India, Pakistan, and the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a crowded press conference in New Delhi on the last day of his visit, Hashemi-Rafsanjani added that Pakistan had conveyed to him that it was willing to accept Iranian mediation on the Kashmir issue. He said, "Kashmir issue must be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties to the dispute," and expressed his satisfaction that "sincere efforts are being made" to this effect.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani, however, cautioned India, Pakistan and the people of Kashmir against the U.S. designs in Kashmir.

On Indo-Iran relations, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that his country was keen to further strengthen its ties with India in economic and other fields.

He in this regard added that Iran would provide all facilities for transit trade between India and Central Asian countries.

On the ambitious project of laying of pipeline to bring gas from Iran to India, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the feasibility reports on the project would be ready in two to three months, and thereafter the two countries would start the work to implement the proposal.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani advocated cooperation among India, Iran, Pakistan and China to establish peace in the South-West Asia and ward off foreign interference in this part of the world.

Referring to visiting U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin's remarks that he would have rescheduled his trip to India if he knew about the Iranian leader's visit, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said, "it is a matter of shame for the U.S. intelligence agencies for having not come to know about my visit to India which was fixed several months in advance."

On the U.S. pressure on Russia to scrap the nuclear reactor deal with Iran, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said, "I find it difficult that Russia will accept such insult from America."

Saying that his country was determined to go ahead with the said deal, Hashemi-Rafsanjani flayed the us double-standard on this issue.

"Washington has allowed North Korea to have light water reactors and it is assisting Israel in its nuclear activities, but it is putting up pressure on Iran to forego acquiring the reactor. It is a case of sheer injustice," said Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

He said that his country was committed not to produce atomic bomb and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had certified that Iran had no nuclear weapon manufacturing capability.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani ruled out that the U.S. threat to impose economic sanctions against Iran would be of any significance. "Iran is sufficient in many fields, therefore such sanctions would be meaningless."

On the West's charge that Iran is sponsoring terrorism, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said his country was itself a victim of terrorism and had always respected international law.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that Iran was in favor of extension on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) but with certain conditions which Iran would soon spell out.

Further on News Conference

BK1904094695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iran is of the opinion that the Kashmir issue should be solved through a consensus among India, Pakistan and the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing a crowded press conference before his departure from New Delhi, the Iranian president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, appreciated India's efforts for a solution and offered his country's mediation to resolve the issue, if wanted. He said the situation in Kashmir is not satisfactory but is not disappointing, as sincere efforts are being made by India to ease it.

Asked whether the Babri Masjid [mosque] will be rebuilt, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said he had discussed the matter with officials during his Lucknow visit yesterday and there is no need for any unnecessary propaganda on this.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said Iran has not decided to manufacture any nuclear weapon. He expressed the hope that Russia will not succumb to U.S. pressures against the sale of nuclear reactors to Iran. He said Iran's nuclear program is peaceful, and if Washington releases the frozen Iranian assets it would mean that U.S. wants to improve its ties with Tehran.

The Iranian president ruled out withdrawing the fatwa [Islamic legal ruling] of death threat on the novelist Salman Rushdie and asserted that such religious jurisprudence will continue in Iran.

On revising the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty], he said Iran favors extension of the 1970 treaty and will announce its stand soon. Mr. Hashemi—Rafsanjani said Tehran is also prepared to offer access to all countries to the Central Asian republics through Iran.

Later, the Iranian president was given a warm farewell at the Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] by Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani has since left New Delhi for Tehran with the delegation that came with him. The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha

Rao, set aside protocol norms and went to see off the Iranian president at the Palam airport in New Delhi.

Minister's Assessment of Visit Viewed

BK1804100995 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 18 Apr 95 p 9

[Article by K.P. Nayar: "Emerging national consensus on Iran"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] If New External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee has faith in the supernatural concept of a good omen, he has reason to take a very positive view of the ongoing visit of Iranian president 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to India.

During question hour on Mr Mukherjee's first day in Parliament as External Affairs Minister, the first starred question related to Indo-Iranian relations. Contrary to fears that the question might open up controversies or generate heat in the House, Mr Mukherjee had an easy time fielding the volley of supplementaries.

Indeed, no External Affairs Minister could have asked for more. From all sections of the House, cutting across party lines, there was pronounced support for a policy which would bring India and Iran closer together.

If Iran thus set the pace for the emerging public persona of the new boss of South Block, what ought to make Indians sit up and think is the all-round support expressed in Parliament that day for a policy of constructively engaging Iran at a time when Tehran's image is that of an international pariah.

More than anything else, it is this emerging national consensus in India on Iran which will enable Mr Rafsanjani and Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao to rework their agenda for bilateral relations this week.

It was Mr Rao's landmark visit to Tehran in September 1993 which opened a new chapter in Indo-Iranian relations. But this new chapter did not, unfortunately, proceed far enough because of a variety of reasons. Within India, that too among some powerful sections of the Government, there was skepticism about Iran's role in this country.

But more important, neither India nor Iran could properly define their relations in that nascent phase of bilateral interaction. The history of Iran's ties with the outside world in the last quarter of a century has been entirely in petrodollar terms.

With India, it had to be different. There is a civilisational element to Indo-Iranian relations, a symbol of which is Mr Rao himself. He speaks Farsi—not because he went out of his way to learn it, but because until the beginning of this century, Farsi was the official language in the court in Hyderabad.

This civilisational aspect of Indo-Iranian relations is amply reflected in Mr Rafsanjani's itinerary this week. On Monday, he inaugurated the Najul Belagh a conference in Delhi on the teachings of Caliph Ali.

On Tuesday, his visit to Lucknow will provide a shot in the arm for two traditional handicrafts in Uttar Pradesh, kept alive by artisans in the villages around Faizabad and Varanasi.

The handicrafts, known as Jamdani and Kamdani, were brought to India from Iran by the Mughal rulers. Forgotten in these days of mechanised production, an exhibition of these traditional items has been organised in Mr Rafsanjani's honour.

Then there is the shadow that Iran casts over Indian Muslims, who are much more in number than the entire population of Iran itself. Despite the bonhomie established during Mr Rao's visit to Iran, suspicions persisted among sections of Indian opinion about Iran's intentions in this country in its role as an upholder of Islamic causes.

To some extent, a modus vivendi will be found for this problem when Mr Rafsanjani makes the symbolic gesture on Tuesday of travelling to Lucknow to address intellectuals and Muslim scholars there.

Just over two years ago, in the aftermath of the destruction of the Babri Masjid, Iran had demanded that the mosque should be rebuilt at the very spot where the demolition took place. It is a reflection of how far Iran has travelled on the road towards accommodation with this country that the Indian government is hosting a visit by Mr Rafsanjani to Uttar Pradesh, where the Babri Masjid was demolished.

The Iranian President's meeting with Mr Mulayem Singh Yadav, who represents a new face of Indian secularism, may yet turn out to be a halfway-house in Iran's search for credibility in dealing with India.

Those who are skeptical of Iran must realise that these factors make India's relations with Iran different from Tehran's ties with say Washington or London. The Clinton administration's current policy of containing Iran not only has no relevance to India, but can also be counter-productive from New Delhi's point of view.

The Americans, especially Secretary of State Warren Christopher—who was in charge of the Carter administration's Iran policy and was pulverised during the hostage crisis—will take many more years to live down the fact that Iran had stood up for itself since the Islamic revolution in 1979.

Such an attitude may even persuade the US to one day launch a military adventure against Iran. But after any such adventure, the US will cross the Atlantic and go back home.

But for a country like India, dealings with Iran has its own and very different compulsions. For India, Iran is a neighbouring country. It is in India's interests to constructively engage Iran instead of joining the US game of checkmating Tehran at every stage.

The agreements being signed during Mr Rafsanjani's visit and the clear direction that Indo-Iranian relations are taking after the latest round of talks between the two countries clearly show that both sides are aware of a confluence of interests in bilateral and regional cooperation.

Commentary, Reaction to Bhutto's U.S. Visit

Editorial: 'Uneven-Handed'

BK1504105695 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 15 Apr 95 p 11

[Editorial: "Uneven-Handed"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It will be very surprising if experts at the Prime Minister's Office do not make a hard-headed assessment of Pakistan Premier Benazir Bhutto's visit to the United States and compare it with Mr Narasimha Rao's to that country last year. They should normally be not comparable. But then on Washington's own admission India in its South Asia policy is only as good as to be treated evenhandedly with Pakistan. Even if the South Block is reluctant to measure the consequences of the two visits, independent efforts would not be deterred by doubts about their fruitfulness. Among the primary results of Ms Bhutto's sojourn is a clear sign that the Clinton Administration is entirely converted to Pakistan's (or, perhaps more accurately Ms Bhutto's) point of view over a host of subjects. They can be listed as Pakistan's claims about its peaceful nuclear programme; about Pakistan being a moderate Islamic State with a divinely ordained role to stem the tide of religious fundamentalism; and it being a bulwark against terrorism. It may be noted that the US Congress is yet to demonstrate whether it agrees with the Clinton Administration. Even if it finally does not, Ms Bhutto's success in getting Mr Clinton to make blatantly partisan comments on Kashmir and nuclear proliferation, among other things, will cause concern in India. For, he has turned his face away from CIA report that Pakistan has nuclear bombs; has ignored the significance of the secret reactor near Sargodha that would produce plutonium; and does not worry about the terrorist schools in Pakistan although Ms Bhutto herself appeals to the US for help in combating domestic terrorism. It is useful to remember that the US Congress acts as an instrument of checks and balances, but the US remains effectively a presidential system.

Ms Bhutto's visit of the US may not be an entirely unqualified success. It is possible that the US bent backwards to make her visit a success to save her politically against her political rivals, principally Mr Nawaz Sharif. Washington probably thinks Ms Bhutto is more pliable than Mr Sharif for the role it wants Pakistan to play; to be used against a spreading Islamic fundamentalist threat which incidentally would also weaken a non-Arab Islamic build-up led by Iran; to stem the civil war in Afghanistan and some Central Asian republics; and, more relevantly to India, to keep the cauldron in Kashmir simmering. What the US does to prop up Ms Bhutto's leadership is a Pak-US affair. But it would be patently unfair for the US to make India pay a price for America's regional use of Pakistan. This is precisely what would happen by promoting an arms race following resumption of the old security alliance relationship between Pakistan and the US. Ms Bhutto has indicated what she thinks about relations with India by announcing in the US that she would send the figurehead President Leghari to next month's SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit in New Delhi. The US has encouraged her in her negative approach towards India. If it is non-partisan, the least it could do is not to meddle in matters it knows it cannot resolve.

Views on Pressler Law

BK1804093295 Delhi NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 17 Apr 95 p 6

[Article by Ranit Kumar: "New Arms Race if Pressler Law is Withdrawn"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the conclusion of Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's recent U.S. visit, it is eminently clear that the Clinton administration wants to withdraw the sanctions imposed on Pakistan under the Pressler law. This would likely start a new arms race in South Asia. The U.S. Administration is well aware of this, but the United States is deliberately taking this step. Why? According to observers, the U.S. defense industry is in a great recession. If U.S. weapons manufacturers can obtain orders, they might generate extra job opportunities. At various forums during her recent U.S. visit, Benazir Bhutto tried to impress upon the authorities that she can buy weapons from other countries like Russia and France, but she wants to buy them from the United States to provide jobs for U.S. workers. The United States has an influential lobby of weapons manufacturers that has been pressuring the U.S. administration for many years. These companies have recently acquired many new contracts worth billions of dollars in the Middle East. Now they want to recapture their lost market in South Asia.

It is doubtful whether the Clinton administration will be able to help these weapons manufacturers. Efforts have been underway from the moment Bill Clinton assumed office to lift the sanctions against Pakistan under the Pressler law. Within a few months of Bill Clinton coming to power, news began to circulate in Washington that the U.S. defense establishment was toying with the idea of withdrawing military and economic sanctions against Pakistan for at least a year. This would allow the delivery of the 28 F-16 bombers that Pakistan bought and which are being stored in the hangers of the American Lockheed company. Due to stiff opposition in the Senate, however, the Clinton administration failed in this effort and the issue was closed. Later, Pakistan helplessly began to seek the return of the $655 million it deposited as an advance on the F-16 deal. When the Clinton administration agreed, Pakistan again asserted that it would be much better to receive the bombers than the money.

The only real success that Benazir achieved during her U.S. visit was the public declaration by President Bill Clinton that he would recommend a relaxation in the Pressler law to Congress. At a time when the United States has launched a drive to have the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty extended indefinitely, however, how can the Clinton administration convince the Congress of the need to lift the Pressler sanctions against Pakistan—especially after the disclosure that Pakistan is installing a new nuclear reactor at Khushab in central Punjab?

If North Korea or Iraq had been involved in the clandestine installation of a nuclear reactor, the United States would have raised a hue and cry. It would have rested only after destroying the reactor using its influence in the United Nations. The superpower's silence over the disclosure about the Khushab reactor is amazing. Moreover, the U.S. Administration is still talking about lifting the Pressler sanctions against Pakistan and is boosting Pakistan's morale through its mysterious silence over this disclosure. Could its silence be interpreted as tacit approval of what Pakistan is doing? This stand undermines U.S. concern over nuclear nonproliferation. The United States has a knack for remaining silent when its own interests are being served. Thus, the U.S. policy of harassing any country in the name of nuclear nonproliferation while striving to resume economic and military aid to a country openly flouting the treaty's provisions by continuing its nuclear program betrays U.S. duplicity and deceitfulness. The sanctions were imposed on Pakistan under the Pressler law when President George Bush refused to certify that Pakistan was not pursuing its nuclear program. As a result, Pakistan had to stop in the middle of its six-year program, which was based on U.S. economic and military aid worth about $3 billion.

Now that the Republicans have the majority in the Senate, it appears impossible that a proposal by the Democratic administration to relax the Pressler law will be passed easily. The Clinton administration has only one year left in its term. It is impossible for it to have the Pressler law repealed in such a short time. Yet the very fact that the Clinton administration would make such a proposal in the Senate is cause for worry in India. It is chiefly because of the Pressler law that there have been no big arms purchases in the Indian subcontinent for the last five years. Although Pakistan did enter into an agreement with France to buy three modern submarines and bought five frigates from Britain, India has not made any big purchases during this period. India has warned the United States that if it lifts the Pressler sanctions against Pakistan, India will resume production of the Prithvi missile. If India does this, naturally Pakistan will begin buying more M-11 missiles form China. Thus will ensure a new race in South Asia to buy more deadly weapons.

Editorial Refutes Success

BK1904091195 Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 18 Apr 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Despite Benazir's Claims"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It was necessary for Benazir Bhutto to extol the success of her U.S. visit when she returned to Islamabad, not only to impress the opposition but also to dupe and mislead her people. She was obliged to do so to assure them that the United States will continue to side with Pakistan in its struggle against India. An impartial observation, however, reveals only that the United States does not want to ditch its old ally. The United States is making constant efforts to keep its old friend in the fold in order to gain access to the fundamentalist Muslim countries and also keep a kind of check on India's activities. Under the changed circumstances, this is the limit of Pakistan's utility to the United States. That is why President Clinton recommended that Congress make a one-time exception to the Pressler law so the F-16 bombers can be delivered to Pakistan, even with the knowledge that Pakistan's clandestine nuclear program is continuing. "We have already received money from Pakistan (for the F-16 deal). This is unfair; we should either return the money or supply the bombers to Pakistan." Clinton could not have said anything else. The President's assurance, however, does not mean that Congress will readily accept his recommendation and make a one-time exception to the Pressler Laws to allow the delivery of the bombers to Pakistan despite its continuing secret nuclear program. Mr. Pressler himself has strongly objected to his President's comment and adopted a very rigid attitude against the proposed U.S. military aid to Pakistan. As Ms. Benazir's bad luck would have it, a startling disclosure about Pakistan's clandestine nuclear preparations was made by a newspaper while she was still in the United States.

Benazir Bhutto also claims that the United States is prepared to accept Pakistan's proposal and play the role of mediator to resolve the Kashmir tangle between India and Pakistan. This is nothing new. After its success as a mediator in the peace talks between the PLO and Israel, the United States expressed its willingness to mediate between India and Pakistan many years ago. Pakistan has long been trying to rope in a superpower to mediate in resolving the Kashmir tangle; to use that power's help to obtain from India what it is unable to obtain through its own efforts. India's stand on the issue is well known. It considers the Kashmir problem a purely bilateral issue that can only be solved through direct negotiations between the two countries. India has made it absolutely clear many times that it will not accept any third party intervention or mediation to settle the issue. Due to

India's firm attitude, the United States had to accept that it cannot mediate on Kashmir until India asks it to. Thus, the U.S. readiness to mediate puts no extra pressure on India, notwithstanding Benazir's assertion to her countrymen that U.S. mediation will put India in deep trouble.

Benazir's claim that the United States wants a referendum in Kashmir is totally false and baseless. The United States closed this chapter long ago, accepting that a referendum in Kashmir is impossible under existing circumstances. Pakistan still wants a referendum in Kashmir, though it is unwilling to meet the UN condition that it first vacate "Azad" Kashmir (Pak-occupied Kashmir). The United States is not prepared to do whatever Pakistan wants. After all, it must maintain good relations with India. Moreover, no matter what the United States wants it certainly cannot force India to toe Pakistan's line. No doubt the United States does not want to spoil its relations with Pakistan, but under present circumstances India has assumed greater importance.

Iran

SALAM Questions Turkey's Motives in Iraq

NC1904105095 Tehran SALAM in Persian 5 Apr 95 p 8

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Turkey's extensive military moves in northern Iraq can be considered the most important development in the new year on the regional level. There is no doubt that the attacks by the Turkish Armed Forces on this area can have complex reasons and causes, not all of which have the concurrence of the Turkish hierarchy. These actions also have elicited a variety of reactions on the international and regional levels, especially among Turkey's neighboring countries.

Four viewpoints can be considered more salient than the others:

1. According to some observers of Turkish issues, Ankara intends to implement the former plan of the late president Turgut Ozal for the formation of a federation comprised of Turkmens, Arabs, and Kurds in northern Iraq. This premise may not be entirely correct as Turkey needs to forge relations with the Iraqi Government, which has the oil-rich areas of Karkuk and Mosul under its control and not the Kurds, which are controlling the provinces outside the oil-rich areas.

2. Some other analysts of regional issues believe that the West's long-term objective is the dismemberment of Turkey as a precursor to the realization of the dream of a Greater Israel and Armenia. Accordingly, it is seeking to support autonomy for the Kurds, which is why Turkey has resorted to attacking northern Iraq. It appears that in view of the importance of the presence of Turkey in the southern part of NATO as a Western ally in the region and the fact that the Westerners are aware of the improbability of the success of the formation of a Kurdish government in the region, this viewpoint may not have any correct foundation.

3. Another view is that the United States and Turkey are planning to separate the oil-rich regions of Karkuk, which according to some experts would cater to territorial and economic interests and at the same time would undermine the Iraqi central government in keeping with U.S. wishes. It seems that even though this theory has some validity, in view of the opposition of the Iraqis and the neighboring peoples and world public opinion, this would not be very plausible.

4. The fourth viewpoint is that the Turkish echelons also believe in the need to prevent the formation of a Kurdish government in the region on the one hand and instability and insecurity on the other. [passage omitted]

An appraisal of Turkey's policy and objectives in its attack on northern Iraq will clarify what problems and obstacles this policy is encountering and Baghdad's stance on the subject.

The most important problem that Turkey has in its recent military moves in northern Iraq is the issue of world public opinion, in particular the stances of the European countries, Russia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The EU countries, with which Turkey is anxious to forge political and economic relations, have unanimously condemned this Turkish action and have whipped up an adverse international atmosphere against Turkey's move. Some of them, such as the Netherlands, Norway, and Germany, have even suspended the dispatch of arms to that country so that Turkey is in a state of isolation, even though the opposition of the Greeks and Russians to Turkey's recent operations can be viewed against the backdrop of their rivalry and differences with Turkey in other parts of the world.

As for the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is the country closest to Turkey opposing its actions in northern Iraq, it has warned Ankara of the reverberations of its latest actions and has called for an end to Turkey's military operations there.

While stressing the continuation of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Islamic Republic of Iran is not in favor of once again enduring the heavy burden of hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees being forcibly pushed onto its soil due to the thoughtless actions of others when Turkey has closed its borders to them.

Turkey's other problem is the popular resistance, which it is facing in the cities of Zakho and al-'Imadiyah that have been occupied, that is being backed by the various Kurdish factions such as the Islamic Movement, the Iraqi Communist Party, the Kurdish Socialist Party, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. The latest incident related to this is the murder of a Turkish officer in Zakho.

The other problem of Turkey in this regard is the U.S. opposition to the closeness of Iraq and Turkey and efforts to extricate Baghdad from its current state of isolation. The United States has endeavored to reduce its pressure on Turkey in this regard by projecting Ankara's military actions in the region as a legitimate act of self-defense. Otherwise the extension of the presence of the multinational forces in Incirlik base—which Turkey considers as beneficial to the Kurds—would not have been possible if relations between Iraq and Turkey had been normalized.

However, in the view of the Americans, Ankara's reconciliation with the Kurds would have isolated Saddam and the induction of Turkey into the European Common Market would have been a better choice than the suppression of the Kurds and dealings with Saddam. This issue will probably be discussed with Turkish officials during the visit by the high-level U.S. delegation next week.

It appears that in the current circumstances Turkey, which has taken a step on its own initiative to establish stability in northern Iraq by deploying its forces, does not have the capability to accomplish this by itself, nor has it chosen an appropriate method to do so.

Iraqi Charge, Majles Official Discuss Sanctions

NC1304142895 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 9 Apr 95 p 1

[Report from the TEHRAN TIMES Political Desk]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran—The Iraqi Charge d'Affaires, Fallah Nuri Samarmad, met with Tehran Majles Deputy and member of Majles Commission for Foreign Affairs, Dr Sa'id Raja'i-Khorasani here yesterday.

In his visit, Samarmad, requested the Iranian government to concentrate all its efforts on lifting the economic sanctions against Iraq, and to play an effective and efficient role in solving the current Iraqi economic crisis.

Expressing his concern over the current situation in Iraq, Raja'i said that the present pressure on the Iraqi people is the result of Iraq's recent haphazard policies towards its neighbors.

Raja'i said that he wished these meetings had taken place 15 years ago to stop the disasters which have occurred in the two countries.

Pointing to economic sanctions on Iraq, Raja'i said that the key to this solution is not in Iran's power. The UN Security Council, however, should be convinced of Iraq's goodwill; until this happens, all countries have to observe the UN resolutions.

Raja'i added he hoped that Middle Eastern countries would grab opportunities to compensate for the past and, by paving the way for cooperation among them, take a united stand against foreigners' presence in the region.

Trial of 3 U.S. Citizens Accused of Espionage Continues

LD1904101895 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Supreme Court of Justice is currently investigating espionage cases against three U.S. citizens. Addressing a group of reporters this morning to announce this news, the president of the State Supreme Court of Justice said: The preliminary trial of investigating the files of the three U.S citizens accused of espionage has ended and these files are under review in the State Supreme Court.

Ayatollah Gilani added: The State Supreme Court investigates cases such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and crimes of indecency out of turn.

Rafsanjani Issues Statement on U.S. 'Threats'

LD1404185995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 14 April 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following the recent days' passive [source translation of enfe'ali, translated in referent item as reactive] threats and moves by the United States concerning an economic sanction and exertion of fresh pressures on the Islamic Republic of Iran, the president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, has released a statement, describing such moves as ineffective, adding that all these take place in order to justify the illegitimate and illegal military presence of the United States in the region and to sell expensive and unnecessary weapons to the regional states. The statement further reads: What is today seen in the passive [reactive] and illogical diplomacy of the United States against Iran is the result of the fundamental mistake by the American statesmen during the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran and its continuation in during later years to date. The reality is that at that time the U.S. Administration failed to realize and understand the nature and dimension of the Islamic revolution and through wrong stances it paved the grounds for the confrontation of the United States with the great divine revolution as well as the Islamic ummah, a revolution which born victory despite the power of the then rulers of Iran and Zionism and imperialism, all-sided supporters for them.

The revolution won victory on the unprecedented presence and the unity of the people of Iran and it attracted the support of millions of people and deprived of the world and with this huge capital it managed to go successfully through problems and plots which were created in the post-revolution era as well as the eight year long sacred defense against the all-sided military aggression by the Iraqi regime, which enjoyed the financial and propaganda support of the Eastern and Western powers as well as those of the oil-rich countries, plus the propaganda of new imperialism. And finally this revolution managed to prove its legitimacy and innocence in the international circles which had registered no record of just and fair approach towards the revolution.

Today too the revolution is successfully going through the reconstruction and development era. We expected that the Democrat government of the United States would display its understanding of this revolution through refraining from obstructionism and expressing regret over the past behavior of the U.S. administrations.

Unfortunately the interventions and obstructionism of the United States, which resemble those same colonialist moralities of the past, continued and instead of paying attention to the mistakes of the past and correcting the wrong policies of the U.S. statement, the Americans resorted to illogical acts like freezing and confiscating the Iranian assets, severing ties, unsuccessful invasion of Tabas in Iran, resorting to coup attempts, employing agents for terrorism, and finally encouraging the Iraqi regime to invade Iran and waging all-sided feigned propaganda against the Islamic revolution, aimed at diverting the public opinion. They even impudently spoke of uprooting the great Iranian nation with thousands of years of historical background and civilization.

Apparently repeated failures in fulfilling West's wrong policy instead of making the U.S. statesmen review their policies has increased their anger and resultantly, through non-professional and unskilled moves and new claims and charges extended the scope of this illegal, unsuccessful invasion.

The claim of the manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons as well as attempt for manufacturing of nuclear arms and expansion of conventional arms is made apparently with the objective to horrify the neighbors of the Islamic Republic of Iran and justify illegal military presence in the region and the imposing sale of expensive and unnecessary arms to the regional countries; the charge of manufacture of chemical weapons against a country which has shown self-restraint in the course of eight years of defense in the face of vast deployment of chemical weapons and many other violations by the Iraqi regime, including destruction of civilian centers and air-raid against its passenger planes when Iran has never forgotten the humanistic principles; the claim concerning Iran's attempt to have access to nuclear weapons, despite the fact that Iran has been a country which has affected all its international undertakings in the field of nonproliferation of nuclear arms, something which has been repeatedly confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency; the charge which accuses Iran of terrorism or support for terrorism despite the fact that this revolution has been the number one victim of terrorists who are today active in the United States; the charge of violation of human rights and dictatorship against a revolution which has been produced according to the will of the people, a revolution which contrary to the tradition of contemporary revolution held referendums and popular elections since the very beginning and throughout its existence, has enjoyed the full support of people in all scene; these charges are so baseless and illogical that do not even convince their announcers. This is especially true when these charges are brought up by a government which is itself a supporter of state terrorism, aggression, manufactures biological, nuclear and chemical arms for Israel and supports dictatorial regimes which have no experience even one day of elections, parliaments or councils.

It is not clear how the American statesmen think about the world people's thoughts and understanding because these same American statesmen try to introduce their impudent attempts to sell arms to others as being in the direction of saving peace, democracy and human rights or in order to maintain illegitimate and colonialistic interests in the region pretend the Islamic Republic of Iran a threat to its neighbors, a country which during its existence has done none but good friendly ties with its neighboring states. Perhaps this analysis is not far from reality that as a result of their own diverting propaganda, which has unfortunately diverted a major portion of the U.S. public opinion concerning the realities of the region and Iran, the American rulers have been sunk in a self-made swamp and to save themselves from this trap they just repeat the past mistakes and make things even more difficult for themselves. Perhaps the rival group has today designed a new trap for the Democrats in the parliament, which is their new bunker, to win victory in the elections. No matter what the reason the current move is, the U.S. political directors should once again review their misunderstandings, wrong performance, and historical mistakes.

No doubt for a country like Iran, which enjoys huge resources and a vast network of foreign relation and ties, a trade ban by the United States would not be counted as a significant event in the country's economy. Perhaps some trade exchanges have deceived them. But thinking for a while make it clear that these cooperations have not been urgent and can have other reasons. The U.S. policy is dual because the U.S. is interested to establish trade ties with Iran but bans others from having such ties with us and has pressed its rivals to sever economic ties with Iran and, contrary to all regulations, wants them to neglect their interests.

It seems that the Americans want to monopolise arms market and profitable projects in the oil-rich countries of the region and at the same time attempt not to lose the Iranian market. It is these dual policies which removes any long term trusts of the world in the Americans. This is another big mistake if the Americans statesmen believe that exertion of pressure on Iran would act as a tool to fulfil their objectives in imposing an unjust peace on the people of Palestine and they should claim the designers responsible for this failure, since the designers have not done anything to settle the existing problems principally. For instance no solution has been introduced to save the lives of millions of Palestinian refugees; or a positive response to the strong sentiments as well as national and Islamic and humane feelings of the people have been savagely suppressed during half a century. There has neither been a response to the unforgettable wish for return home and regaining the legitimate rights which have been lost. There has been no result for tens of years of jihad, martyrdom, and hundreds of thousands of victims as well as similar basic issues. If only one opposition view from the side of Iran is so effective which can, without a practical action, paralyse such a plan by the small and large powers then is it not better for the Americans to review their approach and attitude towards such source of influence and power?

It is necessary for the designers of the recent American moves to pay attention to the fact that the new adventurism, like 16 years of illogical attitude of the past, would not entail favorable results for the United States. For in view of the United States, economic problems and the situation of the world markets, the Americans will be the ones who will suffer most and having fully realized the power of Islam and Iran, and as a president of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced that relying on its human resources, presence and vigilance of the self-sacrificing people on the scene, strength of the system and the geographical location, Iran today is no appropriate scene for new adventurism of the United States and is prepared to end to [as heard] the existing economic ties any time it feels appropriate and continue with its construction plan with full force.

Such illegal and illogical moves will just lead to instability in the region and disturbance of healthy political and economic ties at the international level.

[Signed] Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran

U.S. 'Double Standard' on Nuclear Treaty Discussed

NC1304141195 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 8 Apr 95 p 15

[Commentary by M. Rahman: "Double-Standard Policy"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Recently, the Foreign Minister of the Zionist regime, Shim'on Peres, in an interview with an Austrian-based newspaper, has said that Israel will not sign the nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This openly expressed statement by the Israeli foreign minister divulges the real face and aggressive character of the Zionists.

According to reports from reliable international sources, Israel is equipped with at least 200 nuclear warheads. It appears that, in order to enforce its illegitimate position in the Middle East, the Zionist regime needs to produce nuclear weapons, for it believes such weapons guarantee its security.

There is no doubt that if a nuclear war occurs, even on a small scale in the Middle East, due to its far-reaching effects no country in the region will be safe. Therefore, it seems that Israeli's refusal to sign the NPT is that the occupier of Quds [Jerusalem] wants to hold the weapon as a bargaining chip for its enemies.

For a regime which is alien to the region and which, due to its racist beliefs and aggressive character, is totally isolated, relying on nuclear weapons is unexpected.

Political observers believe that Washington's policy regarding the NPT is again a double standard and in the interest of Israel. The U.S. policy provides an opportunity for the Zionist regime to provide itself with any kind of nuclear weapons under the pretext of security.

The U.S. however, exerts pressure on Arab and other regional countries, which have suffered from the aggressive and expansionist policies Israel, to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This double-standard arises from the United States' biased support for Israel.

On the basis of this double-standard and biased policy, the foundation is laid for an inferior position of Islamic countries compared to Israel. Egypt is a clear example in this regard.

It is time for Islamic countries to join hands and stand up against such double-standard policies, adopting a strategy by which they can force the occupying regime to kneel down to signing the NPT.

Writer: Nation Cannot Be 'Intimidated' by U.S., Israel

NC1304145895 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES (International Weekly) in English 6 Apr 95 p 2

[Editorial: "Iran To Prosper Despite U.S.-Zionist Pressure"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In recent days we have been hearing some really predictable statements from officials in the U.S. and the Zionist regime in the occupied Palestine. These statements, which aim to create harmony between positions of European countries, Japan and China with those of Israel and the U.S., indicate that those uttering the statements intend to create economic hardships for Iran.

Warren Christopher, the U.S. Secretary of State, has said recently that he thinks that the pressure on Iran must be increased. He said that the Clinton administration is going to discuss the Iranian issue in a special meeting due to be held next week.

Simultaneous with Christopher's announcement, the health minister and the former general of the Zionist regime said at a conference held in Tel Aviv that calling for a European-U.S. coalition in order to pressure the Islamic government of Iran to give up its present dangerous ways was essential.

It remains to be seen in the weeks to come, what is meant by "sanctions", "pressures" and whether the "European-American alliance" will succeed. What is already clear is that these restrictions will not yield any results. In the past 16 years, this is not the first time that the U.S. and Israel are making such plans and it will not be the first time that the enemies of Iran will face a debate. During the excruciating years of 8-year imposed war, boycotts of this sort were imposed many times but they could not break the will of the Iranian nation.

As the late Imam Khomeyni said on the occasion of breaking the economic and political relationship with the U.S., a measure taken by the U.S., that if the U.S. has ever given us any service in the history of its relations, it was the breaking of these ties because it is during an economic boycott that the potentialities of our youth bloom to fill the needs of the society.

Before convening their meeting next week, the U.S. government should heed the fact that at present time the situation in Iran is not any harsher than the time of the imposed war, nor has the American influence on other countries increased since the time of the imposed war. Rather, the situation has changed for the better to the benefit of the oppressed.

Iran is a vast country, with rich natural and human resources which are both young and creative. These God-given resources pave the way for the people to produce and consume whatever they want within their own borders, as the experience of recent years has shown: The establishment of factories, infrastructural industries, production of agricultural goods and the flourishing of higher and specialized education.

Perhaps it is these bright points that have consistently caused the defeat of any U.S.-Israeli project to form an alliance against Iran.

Iran has never looked to outsiders for its progress and hence is fearless and cannot be intimidated. Let them do what they want: God and people of clean conscience are on the side of the believers in Iran.

Role in Anti-Israeli Actions in Gaza Denied

LD1404074395 Tehran IRNA in English 0643 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, April 14, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran has once again denied playing a role in anti-Israeli activities of Palestinian groups in occupied lands, as claimed by the Zionist regime.

The Zionist regime's U.N. envoy in a letter to U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali early this week attributed Sunday's explosions in the Gaza Strip to Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups.

In its letter, the Zionist regime claimed that the support of certain countries including Iran for those groups (Hamas and Islamic Jihad) was a decisive factors for continuation of attacks on Israeli forces.

In a letter to Butrus-Ghali on Thursday, Iran's permanent envoy to the U.N. Kamal Kharrazi called such accusations levelled against the Islamic Republic of Iran as "unfounded" and an attempt to misportray realities and blame others.

The letter underlined that the realities in the occupied lands were nothing but the outcome of the brutal policies adopted by the Zionist regime against Palestinians. Contrary to the claims of Israeli envoy to the United Nations, the Islamic Republic of Iran had no part in recent events and developments in the occupied lands and that such accusations were levelled in pursuance of the Zionist regime's expansionist policies, which would pose serious threats to the peace and security of the region, Kharrazi said.

Editorial: Israel's 'Crimes' in Gaza Backfiring

NC1404070295 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 5 Apr 95 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "With Its Crimes, Israel Is Exacerbating the Situation Against Itself"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The explosion of a bomb by Israeli elements in Gaza has sparked a wave of hatred toward the Israeli-'Arafat faction. Although no reliable information on the involvement of 'Arafat's forces in this explosion is in hand, facts speak of the happiness of 'Arafat and his hirelings over the incident and of their hope to exploit such incidents for propaganda purposes. Therefore, the possibility that this explosion was the joint work of Israel and 'Arafat should not be ruled out.

Meanwhile, Hamas has issued a statement holding Israel directly responsible for this incident. Also, the fact that the joint 'Arafat-Israeli forces have been placed on alert to confront Hamas' retaliatory actions show that 'Arafat's forces too consider themselves to be equally responsible and regard themselves as possible targets of retaliation as well.

Thus, a complicated situation has emerged in Gaza and Jericho. On the one hand, the people of Gaza expect crimes which may be perpetrated any moment against them by 'Arafat and Israel, and know that yet another group of innocent people may be sacrificed in an incident similar to the recent explosion. On the other hand, 'Arafat's hireling forces know that they are acting directly under the supervision and orders of the Zionists and must severely crush the Palestinians so that Israel can have peace of mind. Meanwhile, the Zionists do not trust even 'Arafat's hirelings and add to their supervision every moment, fearing that 'Arafat and his hirelings will lose control and thus harm will be inflicted on Israel.

Hamas has declared three days of public mourning for the martyrs of the Gaza explosion and has clarified that it will retaliate to avenge the blood shed by the victims of the Zionists' crimes.

The questions that arise today are: Why do the Israelis perpetrate such crimes? What do they expect to gain from criminal explosions like the one in Gaza? It is very clear that the answers to these questions are not the same and that each incident may be perpetrated by a specific faction with different motives in mind. Moreover, the role of the extremist Zionist groups too should not be ignored, since, generally speaking, they play the role of Israel's military arm and enjoy the constant support of the Israeli army, police, and so-called security forces.

Naturally, under such conditions, Israel's first objective may be to spread fear among the Palestinians so that they will remain "passive." The Zionists have reached such a degree of impudence that they do not deem it necessary to refrain from overt attacks on mosques. Although the Israeli forces' attack on a mosque in Nablus yesterday may have been different from the massacre of the fasting worshipers in al-Khalil, both pursued one objective: intimidating the Muslim Palestinians and making them understand that they are not safe even in their shrines and mosques.

Nevertheless, all facts show that the situation in the occupied territories is moving to the detriment of the Zionists. Neither Israel nor 'Arafat's hirelings had foreseen this situation, and naturally they are upset with the current trend, not knowing how to act and what their next step should be.

It is precisely because of this that instead of being a show of strength for 'Arafat and Israel, the explosion in Gaza was a sign of their weakness and helplessness in front of the Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine. The Gaza explosion was a "blind effort" to calm the disturbed criminals who do not know what to do and are twisting themselves in a knot in rage.

Today the Zionists and 'Arafat's hirelings are facing this tormenting helplessness. They feel helpless and see that they are completely overpowered before the Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine. But their crimes are actually working to their own detriment since they are like oil poured on the already raging fire.

Incoming reports indicate that the joint 'Arafat-Israeli patrols are carefully watching and controlling the situation. But can all these steps grant the necessary peace to the disturbed hearts of 'Arafat and Israel? Can the will and determination of a nation be broken with such steps? Can 'Arafat and Israel work together forever?

Of course, 'Arafat may want to continue to serve Israel because he has burned all his bridges behind him. But Israel is realizing, with increasing concern and awe, that 'Arafat has nothing more to give and that he is unable to correctly carry out his mission as the suppressor of the Palestinians. And the clear meaning behind this is that 'Arafat's era is over and probably one of these days his file will be closed forever.

But despite everything, the Palestinian movement has witnessed similar phases for years on end, and it cannot be stopped with an explosion or some criminal acts by Israel and 'Arafat. Moreover, any incident—however large in dimension—will only add upon the strength of the Palestinian movement and will only help to speed up its advancement toward final victory and the annihilation of Israel. God willing.

Nuclear Cooperation With Russia Viewed

NC1304093095 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 3 Apr 95 p 2

[Commentary by M.M. Ghaffari: "The Completion of the Bushehr Nuclear Plant—Factors in Broadening Iran-Russia Cooperation"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prior to embarking on a discussion of the agreement between Russia and Iran regarding the completion of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, it is necessary to take a quick look at Iranian-German relations.

This is because Germany had earlier committed itself to completing the Bushehr nuclear power plant within the framework of wholesome cooperation with Iran by adopting a clear and cohesive strategy [preceding word in English]. However, this was not to be. Following the visit by Information Minister Fallahiyan, a member of the Iranian cabinet, to the German capital of Bonn on 25 Mehr [17 October] 1372 [year beginning 21 March 1993], the United States as well as Britain clearly displayed their anger at Fallahiyan's visit and his meetings with German officials. British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd commented on this to the German ambassador in Britain regarding the agreement on behalf of the EC in (?Edinburgh).

The U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher also joined this hue and cry with Hurd and reacted strongly regarding Germany's relations with Iran and stated that Germany's cooperation with Iran had gone far beyond a meeting between Fallahiyan and his German counterpart. Of course, at that time, Germany was constantly being censured for promising the Islamic Republic of Iran a quantity of miscellaneous armaments and manufacturing them for this purpose—in other words, for providing military assistance to Iran.

On this very basis, the Clinton administration was greatly angered at Bonn's stance and conduct, as Germany was thus neutralizing U.S. efforts to isolate the Iranian "regime." The crux of the matter goes back to the "Siemens" company, which had initially accepted a commitment to directly collaborate in the completion of the Bushehr power plant installations which had been left incomplete by Germany after the Islamic Revolution in Iran took place. Washington, London, and Tel Aviv expressed their horror at the prospect of Tehran's "obstructionism with regard to the Middle East 'peace'" regardless of the fact that their "desired peace is a thick veil" covering years of the struggle of the suffering people of Palestine which continues proudly amid blood, smoke, and fire until their objective is achieved.

One should recall that in Iran's strategy, peaceful objectives and humane utilization of the Bushehr nuclear power project have been constantly emphasized. Under the aegis of Tehran-Bonn relations, the German Government strove to identify those agents that were responsible in some form or other for the Iraqi Government's belligerence in the war against Iran. In this regard, Bonn stressed that all the European countries except the FRG had recalled their ambassadors from Tehran in the course of the eight-year-long Iran-Iraq war and supported Iraq.

Even though some West European countries such as France and Britain, which had very close relations with Iraq at one time, now try to make them seem very insignificant and on a small scale, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Government—with its political farsightedness—has watched and is watching all their moves intensely.

There is no doubt that with such a stance on the part of Iran, the notion of closeness with Iran and the broadening of bilateral cooperation has always been propounded. However, at the same time, a certain incident occurred which could be resolved diplomatically but which has put Germany on a different path away from Iran. The arrest of Bachman, the director of one of the branches of a German company in Tehran, worried all the Germans resident in Iran and disrupted Iranian-German relations. This is in addition to the affair of the arrest of Szimkus, who was an Iraqi spy who had spied for Iraq in the course of the eight-year-long war.

Naturally, Germany could not give its independent opinion at that juncture and for two explicit reasons it was intimidated by the United States. First, as regards its economic and cultural structure, it is a prominent example of a capitalist country and is forced to remain within the orbit of world imperialism. Second, as a NATO member it is not within its jurisdiction to formulate its extra-territorial diplomacy with complete authority according to its own wishes. [passage omitted]

As for the issue of Germany reneging on its contract for the completion of the Bushehr nuclear project, it may be said that German echelons were well aware that the main reason for Iran's insistence on the completion of the nuclear power plant was to generate electricity and provide potable water for the deprived people of Bushehr Province through non-military technology.

As regards Iran's utilization of this project for military or hegemonistic purposes, as has been alleged in Zionist circles, this is mere politico-propagandist clamor. Therefore, all the senior political directors of Germany, including Helmut Kohl, should not forget history and instead should learn a lesson from it.

Therefore, if an extensive war were to break out in the world, Germany would certainly be considered a major stronghold and would suffer the greatest casualties and economic losses. There is no doubt that Germany's actions based on breach of contract and its refusal to complete the Bushehr power plant indicate that this country has succumbed to the greater powers, including the United States, as regards the expansion of its relations with Iran.

In this path, the Islamic Republic of Iran also proved that it can assert its existence within an extensive political and military convergence in the region and the world. It was for this reason that Russia replaced Germany regarding the completion of the Bushehr power plant. Of course, this pertains entirely to Russia's own policy, as the Islamic Republic of Iran has created an atmosphere conducive to all kinds of projects and it was for this reason that industrialist countries are involved in close rivalry to compete for investment in Iran.

In the light of such an assessment, Russia categorically declared—in order to assert its political independence—that in broadening relations with Iran it will not succumb to any power, especially not to the United States. With the arrival of Mamedov, the Russian deputy foreign minister to Iran, the parameters of the relations between the two countries were clarified. Mamedov arrived in Tehran on 24 February and had a meeting with Dr. Velayati.

In this meeting, in addition to exchanges of views on bilateral cooperation, regional and international issues, a written message from the Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev was conveyed to Dr. Velayati in which he stated that his country stresses "the broadening of bilateral cooperation and reciprocal relations and will not cave in to the greater powers." Referring to the injustice in the world, the message added: "Some of the larger countries are supporting injustice in the world. However, since nothing is more important than that freedom prevail, the independent countries will undoubtedly show a reaction to such a policy."

Such facts show that Russia is in favor of cooperation with Iran with regard to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy within the framework of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. Political experts who follow Iranian and Russian affairs believe that the policies of Iran and Russia with regard to the NPT are the same and that Iran is also optimistic regarding cooperation with Russia. Dr. Velayati described Iranian-Russian relations as positive with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] and stated: The Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the proponents of the NPT and even believes in its renewal in this regard."

He elaborated: This issue should be resolved without discrimination on a worldwide level. He referred to the usurpist Jerusalem regime as a conspicuous example of such discrimination as it has an arsenal replete with nuclear weapons, which cannot be concealed by the United States. In addition, the West and the United States continue their unstinting efforts to equip Israel with nuclear weapons in contravention the NPT. Despite these efforts, the fact that Russia is willing to cooperate with Iran for the completion of the Bushehr nuclear power plant is because of the excellent resources and potential [preceding word in English] in the two countries for cooperation in the region, especially in view of the turbulent nature of the region in which both countries are situated. This makes it imperative for the two countries to broaden bilateral relations and cooperation.

Russia is extremely optimistic with regard to cooperation with Iran on the issue of peace in Tajikistan and hopes that all the countries in the region that express interest in resolving the crisis in Tajikistan should participate in doing so as is the case with Iran. In any case, the accord signed between Russia and Iran for the completion of the Bushehr nuclear power plant is without any doubt based on peaceful interests even though some Western media, and in particular the U.S. media, are disseminating negative propaganda to put psychological pressure on Iran.

As to why Russia has agreed to cooperate with Iran for the completion of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, the general impression is that Russia is preparing to tread on two different paths which are actually related. First of all, Russia is seeking to assert its political independence, especially before the United States, and has concentrated its efforts in this regard on the principle that Russia is not a U.S. colony but a completely independent country. Second, Russia has its long-term interests in the Middle East in mind, especially with regard to its neighbors, such as Iran.

Russia's efforts to sell its weapons to the Middle East and to revitalize economic relations with Iraq and Syria follow this logic. It is by keeping these parameters [preceding word in English] that Russia is delivering a warning regarding U.S. efforts to sever its nuclear cooperation with Iran and to expel it from international markets. It also seeks to emphasize that Russian nuclear technology is unrivalled technically and regarding low cost.

Despite the above, the politico-economic circles of the United States have tried their utmost to persuade Russia to revoke its agreement to supply four reactors to Iran. In addition, the United States has threatened that if Russia persists in its adherence to this agreement, it will suspend its assistance to Russia in transforming its ordnance industries into non-military ones which will include the U.S. efforts against Russia as regards the destruction of nuclear weapons on the basis of "START-1."

It appears that Russia is acting with greater political awareness in this regard. This is because it is foreseeable for this country that after the nullification of the Iran-Russia agreement, the United States could act in the same manner as it did with North Korea by eliminating Russia from the scene. With regard to this agreement as well, similar efforts would be made which would be to the detriment of Russia.

It is in view of the aforementioned considerations that Russia is trying to expand the scope of its cooperation with Iran without any qualms regarding the completion of the Bushehr power plant and other peripheral issues. In view of this continued effort on the part of Russia toward gaining political independence, it is obvious that the United States feels cheated and perceives itself to be relegated to the sidelines. Therefore, in order to assert its political and economic presence it will resort to all possible means.

In this regard, U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry has admitted that his government has failed in its efforts to prevent military relations and accords between Russia and Iran. The United States had asked Russia to suspend its ordnance exports to Iran in the future, but it has not attained any measure of success so far. In his interview in JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, Perry confirmed that Boris Yeltsin has not acquiesced to repeated U.S. requests. It appears that the United States is apprehensive regarding the extent of cooperation between Russia and Iran and which of Iran's wishes will be implemented by Russia.

Undoubtedly, the United States believes that Iran wishes to gain access to nuclear weapons! Now that Iranian and Russian diplomatic sources have clearly specified that the objectives of this cooperation are peaceful and merely to have water and electrical energy and nothing else, the Persian adage seems to apply here: "The infidel considers all others to be the same as himself." In the philosophy of the existence of world imperialism spearheaded by the United States, some points are very clear for all: First, the United States is always seeking to get far more and give very little. Second, the United States cannot tolerate anyone's being better off than itself and delights in dominating those who are worse off than itself. Its ultimate desire is to have a unipolar world of which it should be the sole leader.

It would be appropriate to mention that the United States sees two massive difficulties facing it as regards Iran—contrary to the situation in Vietnam and North Korea—to which the U.S. echelons have always admitted and have often referred to Iran's invincibility in this regard. One is that so far, the United States has not been able to combat the Islamic ideology that has proliferated in all corners of the globe. Second, the wave of humanity in Iran with the distinctive patriotic and national characteristics constitutes a major headache for the United States.

This is something that the United States has precisely tested in the course of the 16 years since the Islamic Revolution. Now it has resorted to creating impediments in the paths of all countries that try to get close to Iran or to enter into dealings with it. In this regard, most political observers believe that with its overt and covert assistance to Russia in massacring the Chechen Muslims, the United States is seeking to tarnish Russia's image before Iran in this manner. However, this ploy appears to have been unsuccessful as well. This is because if Russia becomes more audacious in killing the Chechen Muslims, the Americans will see it as the probable return to power of the anti-U.S. hardline factions in Russia and in that case current U.S-Russia relations will also be severed.

On this premise it may be stated that Russia has evolved into a major headache in the world for the United States, especially with regard to its political and defense priorities. The other threat from Russia against the United States is the export of 'mock' technology as a decoy intended to deceive U.S. military intelligence. There is no doubt that the result of such Russian actions will be that in the event of a possible war, the U.S. surveillance and identification systems may pinpoint targets which are actually simulated and false.

The United States witnessed one such example when it claimed to have destroyed the Iraqi Scud missiles in the Persian Gulf war which were just spurious models of the missiles and nothing else. The weekly SUNDAY TIMES has not been sitting idle during all this uproar and has embarked on chanting litanies in unison with its mentor. This weekly commented in one of its recent editions that Iran is building up an arsenal of chemical weapons and that Indian and German companies are supplying the raw materials for the manufacture of chemical fertilizers and poisons!

Such allegations are being made when the United States knows better than all other political organizations or authorities that Iran was the greatest victim of chemical weapons and has constantly opposed the manufacture and use of all such weapons and considers them opposed to all human norms. In any case, the Islamic Republic of Iran is a member of the NPT and opposes weapons of mass destruction. In view of the above, one can gauge the real reason for the U.S. reaction in the agreement for nuclear cooperation between Iran and Russia and it is of no consequence whatsoever how the United States views cooperation between Iran and Russia for the completion of the Bushehr nuclear power plant.

Report of Collision in Plane Crash Denied

LD1804165695 Tehran IRNA in English 1633 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—An Iranian military source denied an AFP report on the Tuesday [18 April] plane crash in Tehran, saying it was not possible to have two planes colliding with only one crashing. The source said that the plane was a training plane flying at a low altitude. "Unfortunately, the pilot was killed in the crash and four civilians were injured after being hit by the fragments of the plane," the source added.

The source said that the crash happened while an air maneuver was underway west of Tehran but the crash had no effect on the maneuver, which went on as scheduled.

Increase in Bank Rates of Interest Reported

LD1304214195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The rate of interest on bank deposit accounts has increased. Our correspondent reports on this point and the provision of banking services to various economic sectors, which were approved by the cabinet yesterday:

[Correspondent] In order to encourage people to deposit their monies in banks, the rate of interest increased for deposit accounts from the beginning of the year [21 March]. The interest on the one-year deposit has now increased from 11 percent to 14 percent, two-year deposit from 13 to 15 percent, three-year deposit from 14 percent to 16 percent and five-year deposit from 15.5 to 18.5 percent. [passage omitted]

Friday Imam Cited on Unrest in Islamshahr, Akbarabad

NC1404095795 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 8 Apr 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Islamshahr—This week's auspicious Friday prayers in Islamshahr were held in the presence of the Tehran deputies in the Majles, state and military officials, regional personalities and 'ulema, and the martyr-nurturing and always-on-the-scene people of Islamshahr and were led by Hojjat ol-Eslam Nowruzi.

In his sermon, Islamshahr's Friday imam referred to the Nowruz [Iranian New Year] message of the esteemed leader on the need for social discipline, work consciousness, and on avoiding waste.

Condemning the recent incident in "Islamshahr which was perpetrated by a group of opportunists and which resulted in damage to government buildings, he said: Thank God that due to alertness and the timely presence of the selfless personnel of the regional law enforcement forces, suspects were arrested and security was fully established in the town.

Further, the Friday imam called on the worshipers to observe divine virtue and shun evil. He also commemorated the great scholar Imam Musa Sadr and his sister on the anniversary of their martyrdom.

He then emphasized the devotion of the people of Islamshahr and their presence on the various scenes of the Islamic Revolution and said: This nation always sincerely accepts and obeys the directives of the esteemed leader of the revolution.

He then referred to the economic problems of the deprived people of Islamshahr and called on the regional officials to tend to these problems more. He also praised the hezbollahi people of Islamshahr, always present, for their participation in the immense marches on Wednesday [5 April] which were organized against the opportunists, ruffians, and hooligans of Akbarabad. [passage omitted]

Pakistan

Portuguese President Soares Pays State Visit

Talks with Bhutto, Leghari

LD1704215895 Lisbon RDP Antena 1 Radio Network in Portuguese 2100 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The [Portuguese] presidential party arrived this afternoon in Pakistan where it will be staying for two days. Mario Soares has already met Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and reminded her that the Electricity of Portugal Company [EDP] and Marconi can help with Pakistan's biggest project for the next 20 years: to build an electricity and telephone national grid. Let us hear more about it from Pakistan, from our correspondent Isabel Gaspar Dias:

[Dias] The Portuguese want to develop economic relations, from China to Pakistan. President Mario Soares arrived early this afternoon and has already met the prime minister. Pakistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, but Benazir Bhutto wants every single village to have access to electricity and telephone within the next 10 years. The Portuguese president offered Portuguese help:

[Begin Soares recording] She mentioned that her biggest project is to provide electricity to the whole country as well as to develop telecommunications. I took the opportunity to tell her that we have in Portugal a great telecommunications company—Marconi—which is very famous and that we will be willing to help her with that task. [end recording]

[Dias] That was a chance for Marconi and EDP, but Benazir Bhutto asked for more. She asked for a loan with preferential terms. Mario Soares told her that he will propose the request to the Portuguese government.

[Announcer] In the meantime, President Soares met this evening Pakistani President Farooq Leghari. The main themes for discussion were the situation in East Timor and—a theme raised by the Pakistani president—the case of Kashmir, which has led to a long dispute with India. Mario Soares promised to talk soon about the issue.

Leghari Hosts Banquet

BK1904014995 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has once again called on India to begin a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir issue in accordance with the UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

He was speaking at a banquet hosted in honor of Portuguese President Mario Soares at the president's house in Islamabad last night. The president said India's use of brutal force in occupied Kashmir and its efforts to hold fraudulent elections show it is not interested in holding a meaningful dialogue on the Kashmir issue. He said Pakistan wants to live in peace and harmony with India, and is confident that with the resolution of the basic problem of Kashmir the two countries will be able to exist as good neighbors. Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari said there is no doubt that India will have to bow eventually to the unshakable determination and morale of the Kashmiri people to win their right to self-determination. Referring to India's allegations about Pakistani assistance for Kashmiri freedom fighters, he said Pakistan has proposed an increase in the number of UN military observers monitoring the Line of Control. He said India's refusal to accept this proposal shows it is afraid that the truth will come out that no material support is being provided to the Kashmiris by Pakistan.

The president said Pakistan and Portugal are working to widen their cooperation in various fields and have signed agreements on cultural cooperation and investment promotion. He expressed the hope that President Mario Soares' visit will help strengthen bilateral relations through extensive economic, commercial, and cultural exchanges.

Referring to Serb aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina, he regretted that many countries are not ready to take firm action in this regard. Also expressing Pakistan's concern over the situation in Chechnya, he said there cannot be any military solution to this problem.

On the extension of Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the president said Pakistan is attending the New York meeting as an observer to help achieve the objectives of this treaty. He said Pakistan has taken several steps to keep South Asia free of nuclear weapons since India triggered a nuclear device in 1974. The international community has supported Pakistan's initiatives.

In his address, Portuguese President Mario Soares stressed the need for a solution to the Kashmir issue. He expressed the hope that all parties concerned will find a just solution to this problem through talks. He lauded Pakistan's work for peace in the world, especially Angola. He said Portugal is a member of the European Union, a major trading partner of Pakistan. Relations between Pakistan and the European Union provide the ideal opportunity for improving ties between the two countries. He said relations between Pakistan and Portugal should be promoted in accordance with Pakistan's importance in the region as well as the world, and there should be cooperation in new areas.

During their earlier talks, President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari told President Mario Soares that Pakistan has the privileged position of working as a bridge between the West and the Islamic world. He said Pakistan has very cordial relations with all its neighbors except India, with whom its relations are tense due to the Kashmir issue. President Mario Soares assured President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari that he will use his good offices to find a peaceful and early resolution to the Kashmir issue.

At a ceremony in Islamabad yesterday evening, President Ahmad Khan Leghari conferred Pakistan's highest civilian award, the Nishan-i-Pakistan, on Portuguese President Mario Soares. The award was conferred on him in recognition of his outstanding role as a statesman, his contributions to the promotion of Pakistani-Portuguese relations, and his firm commitment to the protection of the right to self-determination and human rights.

Bhutto Emphasizes Kashmir in Speech

BK1904010595 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has called upon the European union to play its role for resolution of the Kashmir issue and stop human rights violations in the held valley. She was speaking at a luncheon hosted in honor of Portugese President Mario Soares in Islamabad today. She said serious nonproliferation issues are tied directly to this dispute. She said Indian production of short-range and intermediate-range missiles will have serious consequences for efforts at reducing weapons of mass destruction.

[Begin Bhutto recording] I draw your attention to the tragic situation in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir—one of the oldest items on the UN agenda. The repression unleashed by the authorities to force used some 600,000 paramilitary and military troops—the single largest concentration since the second world war—shock us, and we condemn these violations. [sentence as heard] The Kashmiris deserve our sympathy and support and we seek a solution based on the UN Security Council resolution. Our doors for substantive talks remain open. Our president travels to New Delhi next month for the SAARC [South Asian Association For Regional Cooperation] conference, but no one can silence our support for the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir. The people in the subcontinent look toward the European Union to speak out—a Union committed to human rights. [end recording]

Dr. Mario Soares also expressed Portugese concern over the Kashmir issue. He said the recommendations and resolutions of the United Nations and human rights must be respected. He also lauded efforts of the prime minister for strengthening democracy in Pakistan.

President of Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo group, Mr. Hamid Nassir Chattha, some federal ministers, MNA's [members of national Assembly] and members of President Soares' entourage attended the luncheon.

Agreements Signed

BK1904070695 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan and Portugal have signed two agreements in Islamabad for cooperation in investment and cultural exchanges. Under the first agreement, the two countries will take steps to promote investment and its protection. The other agreement relates to promotion of cultural activities and exchange of cultural troupes, intellectuals and academicians.

The Portugese foreign minister called on his Pakistani counterpart in Islamabad yesterday and discussed with him matters relating to bilateral cooperation, expansion of trade and investment, besides the Kashmir issue. Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali briefed his counterpart on the latest situation in occupied Kashmir and human rights violations. The foreign minister of Portugal said his country condemns human rights violations in occupied Kashmir.

President Rules Out Compromise on Nuclear Program

BK1604081095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 15 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said the government will not make any compromise on vital national interests, including its peaceful nuclear program. Addressing a tribal gathering in Kalay, the headquarters of Orakzai Agency today, he said Pakistan will continue to play an effective role for the cause of peace and stability in the region and the world as a whole. He said Pakistan is passing through crucial phase of its history and will face all the challenges ahead with courage and dedication. He assured the government will avail all the available opportunities for the development and prosperity of the country. He paid rich tributes to the tribesmen in their support to the cause of Kashmir and the holy war in Afghanistan.

Referring to the development of tribal areas, the president said the government has prepared a package of development to banish backwardness from the areas and bring them at par with other developed parts of the country. He assured that all the needed resources will be provided for economic uplift of the tribal areas.

Editorial Views 'Challenge to National Security'

BK1804053395 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 17 Apr 95 p 10

[Editorial: "The Challenge to National Security and Prerequisites To Counter It"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said the government's greatest accomplishment is that it has not accepted U.S. pressure on the nuclear program. Instead, without deviating from its own stance, it persuaded the United States to abandon its unjust and discriminatory treatment toward Pakistan. He said we presented our case to the United States effectively and clarified to the sole superpower that we cannot compromise on national security issues such as the nuclear program. The internal and external threats and the pressure that Pakistan is currently facing are not hidden to anyone. All 48 years of our national existence have been spent countering dangers and pressures. The situation in the past was quite different, however, because India was then our only enemy and we enjoyed the support of the free world and a superpower in countering India. Coincidentally, U.S. and Indian interests have now become identical, thus sandwiching Pakistan.

Prior to the prime minister's U.S. visit, speculation was rife that due to her popularity in the West and the United

States and as an international personality, Prime Minister Bhutto would not only succeed in doing away with the discriminatory U.S. treatment toward Pakistan but would also vindicate Pakistan's stand on the Kashmir issue and nuclear program and secure U.S. aid. Now the nation is being told that the outcome of the visit is that we did not accept U.S. pressure. The prime minister herself is claiming that the success of the visit surpassed her expectations. It should be noted that we achieved some success from the visit. Even if we acknowledge that, then by accepting [qabool kar ke] the U.S. pressure we have, in a sense, achieved a negative success. It remains to be determined whether we are really in a position to counter the U.S. pressure.

The situation now, in the words of General Abdul Waheed, chief of the Army Staff, is that the challenges to the country's security have multiplied. This notion has been bolstered by the fact that we appear lonely within the international community as India pushes us back at every forum. Everyone knows about the India-U.S. alliance. The agenda of the Benazir-Clinton meeting issued by the White House spokesman a few hours before the meeting included Pakistan's nuclear program and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], indicating that the United States wanted us to sign the NPT in return for allowing us some concessions and to roll back our nuclear program. If we give in and sign the NPT and call it a success, thinking that India will also sign it under U.S. pressure, then it is not a success but a failure. India is brazenly continuing with its nuclear program while we are being forced to roll back whatever capability we have achieved in this regard.

As a matter of principle, the United States should be persuaded to understand that the military balance between India and Pakistan cannot be improved without the nuclear program. India is a country with hegemonic designs that has embarked on aggression against Pakistan three times. India still haughtily interferes in our internal affairs. There is no hope for a normalization of Pakistan-India relations unless the Kashmir issue is resolved. Even though the United States has declared Kashmir a disputed territory, India is still trying to conduct farcical elections there. Yet the people of Kashmir and its political leaders demand a plebiscite rather than elections. Under the UN resolutions, it is India's duty to comply. Similarly, India has formulated a plan to lay a railway line to link Jammu and Srinagar. This means India wants to improve its communication links with its integral territory so it can further suppress the people.

The real test of the government under these circumstances will be to make the United States and India accept its principled stand on Kashmir so that the danger of a war in the region can be minimized and the burden of defense expenditures on the economies of the two countries reduced. If this is not possible—apparently it is not—we will be the loser in signing the NPT because the nuclear deterrent is essential to countering the threat to our security. Without this, Pakistan will remain weak and will not be in a position to face India's conspiracies and maneuvers. It is the government's duty to take the nation into confidence and assure the people that there is no inconsistency between its words and deeds and that the government is rejecting all pressure. Similarly, if the military speaks about the multiplication of challenges to national security, then it is the duty of the armed forces to play their role in meeting this situation.

It has always been our stance that the institutions responsible for the country's defense should be confined to their professional spheres because defense is a multidimensional and formidable task that demands full concentration to fulfill. The armed forces, however, cannot face the challenges to the national security unless they are backed by the entire nation. The armed forces need to pay wholehearted attention to fulfilling their duty. It is also necessary to bring an end to the national-level confrontation and political chaos.

It is believed that the current political confrontation is the result of some steps taken in 1993 in which the military leadership was involved. Also, the dangers to the national security that are being highlighted are the logical corollary to the situation and incidents of 1993. Therefore, the nation justifiably expects the armed forces to adhere strictly to their commitment to stay away from interfering in political affairs, thus eliminating apprehensions of military interference in political affairs, ensuring democratic stability in the country, and enabling us to face internal dangers and external pressures. The nation should be confident that its future is being guarded by dependable hands and there is no question of compromising or making deals on the national interests. We do not want confrontation with the United States, nor are we in favor of war with India, but we need not bow to them or always heed whatever they say. We must make our own decisions as an independent, sovereign, and dignified nation. We should not allow anyone to intimidate us into abandoning our interests.

Editorial Considers NPT Extension Conference

BK1704151295 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 17 Apr 95 p 7

[Editorial: "The nuclear debate"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review and extension conference which begins at the United Nations in New York today, is likely to re-open the nuclear debate which was shelved in 1968 when the NPT froze the nuclear balance. In the quarter century since, much has happened which has made a shambles of the credibility of the Treaty. The nuclear club is no longer confined to the original five. There are now at least another six states which have the unofficial credentials to join the group. The freeze that was expected to prevent the use of nuclear technology for military purposes has been unable to check nuclear weapons proliferation.

The world in 1995 faces a graver threat than what it did in 1970, when nuclear knowledge was a jealously guarded secret of the five initiates. Today that technology and the wherewithal that goes with it, have become fairly commonplace, with nuclear weapons being added to the military might of several states at an alarming rate. India, Israel, South Africa, North Korea—the list continues to expand as more states covertly acquire nuclear capability, either through laboratory confirmation or by making weapons. The euphoria that the NPT will easily deter clandestine nuclear development lasted barely for the time it took India to explode a nuclear device in 1974. That blast echoed throughout the world, triggering off a nuclear race. Apparently the authors of the treaty had not taken such a contingency into consideration as their reaction was strangely mute. That India was not a signatory of the NPT further confused the issue, giving it a tacit licence to continue with its nuclear plan. It was this failure of the five guardians of the world's nuclear innocence to proceed against a recalcitrant state that brought out the contradictions within the NPT. It had no way of stopping the spread of nuclear weapons by any state.

Its other major flaw was the hypocrisy of the keepers of the nuclear secrets, to follow what they preached. From the time they signed the treaty at solemn ceremonies, each one has continued to test nuclear devices, above or below ground. There was no decline even in the development of more powerful thermonuclear bombs in a world they were trying to secure from the nuclear peril. It was only in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War that weak efforts were made to curb the nuclear race.

The majority of the non-nuclear countries are reluctant to give an across-the-board extension to the NPT in its present form. At stake is not only the need for a system to ensure the safety of all states from nuclear threat, but a mechanism to prevent the development of nuclear weapons. Merely prolonging the life of an almost moribund Treaty would embolden the existing and future rogue nuclear states. if the world is to be rid of this menace, the nuclear powers should set an example by destroying their own arsenals. Universal conformity cannot be expected by having a regimen of haves and have-nots.

Bhutto Briefs Army Commanders; Stresses Security

BK1904094095 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 19 Apr 95 pp 1, 10

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—Declaring that her visit to the United States had marked a qualitative improvement in Pak-US relations, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, however, made it clear that "national security will not be compromised at any cost."

The Prime Minister was addressing the country's army commanders at the GHQ [General Headquarters] on Tuesday [18 April]. Her visit to GHQ, at the invitation of Army Chief General Abdul Waheed, was in connection with attending the ongoing proceedings of the Army Selection Board. The Board has been in session since Monday to consider promotion cases pertaining to lieutenant colonel upwards. The Board meeting is an annual feature and is normally combined with the Formation Commanders Conference.

Military Secretary, Pakistan Army Major General Khalid Nawaz's earlier gave a briefing on the working and selection procedure of the Board. Later the Prime Minister addressed the participants of the Board presided over by the Army Chief. All the Corps Commanders are its members.

In her address, which was also followed by a question-answer session, Ms Bhutto dwelt on matters ranging from her visit to the US, regional situation, threat perception and measures to combat it, to equipping the armed forces with available modern weapons, making the country's defence impregnable, international security and professional matters of the forces.

"National defence takes precedence on all other issues," said the Prime Minister. She spoke extempore and her address was punctuated with highlights that the government will go all out to explore options for acquiring defence equipment from all other available sources. The Prime Minister informed the military leaders in detail about her visit to the US, her talks with President Bill Clinton and the discussions which had taken place at the Pentagon.

This was the first occasion, following the troika's informal talks held on the day she returned from her American visit, that the Prime Minister disclosed details of her discussions with American leaders, including her meetings with Congressmen and American investors.

As official sources put it, she minced no words in unfolding details of the Pak-US talks in each and every sector, including the thorny issue of defence items, for which Pakistan had already paid.

She also expressed hope that in the near future some significant moves might come from the Clinton Administration to overcome problems, as the President had already hinted in a joint press conference at the White House. "I think the American leadership had realised that the country specific Pressler Law was a blunt instrument and should go," said the Premier.

She said, "I resolve that the country's defence should be impregnable for which my government is ready to equip armed forces with modern weapons."

According to the sources, the Prime Minister also spoke on the current regional situation and threat perception, reiterating her government's commitment to take effective measures for strengthening the defence.

She also informed that the government will not hesitate to release funds for defence purchase from non-US sources till the time Pressler Law remains a hurdle to acquire military hardwares from American firms, the sources said. In context of the internal situation, the Prime Minister informed the commanders that her government had launched a major offensive against terrorists, drug traffickers and those involved in law-breaking activities. She said that "The government will not allow anybody to fan sectarianism, ethnicity and to exploit the situation to the detriment of law and order."

Earlier, on her arrival at the Army Auditorium, the Prime Minister was received by General Abdul Waheed and other senior Army officers.

A handout of the ISPR [Interservice Public Relations] says: "Major General Khalid Nawaz, Military Secretary Pakistan Army, briefed her on the working and selection procedure of the Board, which deals with the promotion of officers from the rank of Lieutenant Colonel upwards. The Prime Minister was informed that a similar Selection Board is held for the promotion from Brigadier to Major General. This Board is presided over by the Chief of the Army Staff and all the Corps Commanders are its members. The Military Secretary acts as the Secretary of the Board. The members make their recommendations based on the service record of the officers and the promotions are effected after confirmation by the Federal Government."

"Later, the Prime Minister addressed the participants of the conference. Her address focused on professional matters, her visit to the US and the situation prevailing in the region. She also answered questions asked by the participants of the conference. During her visit, the Prime Minister was accompanied by Defence Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani and Secretary Defence Syed Salim Abbas Jilani," the handout added.

Indigenous Military Hardware Marks Independence

BK1804022195 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 17 Apr 95 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—As a matter of policy to shun its dependence on foreign crutches, Pakistan Army has taken a big stride towards self-reliance by producing indigenous military transport and equipment of different categories.

The locally manufactured equipment and transport vehicles were put on display for the military commanders, who met for the second day on Sunday during their week-long annual conference of Formation Commanders.

"This marks the beginning of self-reliance within the forces, with an objective to rely less on foreign crutches," said defence sources.

Army Chief General Abdul Waheed expressed his satisfaction at the way the projects have been completed before time by the concerned military departments. "I appreciate efforts of officers of all ranks to complete the job much before the given time frame and I am particularly delighted over the way the projects have been completed, which will prove helpful to the Army in the future," said General Waheed under whom the Pakistan Army has taken a big leap towards self-reliance.

The Corps Commanders, PSOs [expansion unknown] to GHQ [General Headquarters], formation commanders and all the other high-ranking military officers spent Sunday in discussing professional matters, and exchanging views on how to minimise dependence on foreign crutches. The day's proceedings also focused on display of indigenously produced equipment and transport vehicles used for logistics purposes.

According to official sources, indigenously made Rocket Missile Delivery System (RMDS) and kits (accessories) required for launching armour-piercing missile were put on display to the satisfaction of the army commanders. Respective Project Directors of these equipments briefed the commanders and unfolded the details pertaining to the different items. "This is big success and this single display will mark the beginning of many similar ventures to be undertaken locally," said defence sources.

The second display related to military transport, its indigenous production and use for logistics purposes, the sources said.

While Yasoob truck and heavy vehicles for 2.5, 5 or 10 tonnes load is indigenously manufactured upto almost 90 to 95 percent, the overhauling of Shahsawar and Shahzoor, old vintage vehicles, will now have engine replacement and other facilities available with the Army. Previously, the whole process required the assistance of foreign companies. "We have made rapid progress in these areas and many more to come in the future," said defence sources, who deal with these projects.

After having spent the first two days on operational and professional matters, the formation commanders will now start deliberations on the promotion of officers from lieutenant colonel to colonel, brigadier and major general. These consultations will begin from Monday and will carry on till the end of the Formation Commanders conference on April 20.

While Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto will attend a meeting of the Army Promotion Board on April 18, President Farooq Leghari will go to the GHQ on the last day of the conference for the same purpose to approve the recommendations finalised in these meetings for promotion of several dozen military officers.

Foreign Minister Views Kashmir, Current Issues

BK1704150195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, says Pakistan has been encouraged by the American position voiced by President Clinton that Kashmir is a disputed territory and is subject to a final solution through free exercise by the Kashmiris of their will. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad this afternoon, he said the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir are binding both on Pakistan and India as they had accepted them. What is required now is to work out modalities for holding a plebiscite in Kashmir. Pakistan has already sent two nonpapers to India on modalities for holding the plebiscite. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said Pakistan has asked the American president to use his good offices to persuade India for holding a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan for resolving the Kashmir issue. He regretted that India is insisting on her own agenda to have talks with Pakistan which is not acceptable.

Turning to the Pressler Amendment, the foreign minister said President Clinton and other members of the American Administration during the prime minister's visit to the United States have shown their willingness to work with the U.S. Congress to resolve this problem. A number of important Congressmen too have given assurance to the prime minister to this effect. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali referred to the understanding given to Pakistan by the United States at the highest level that there will be no unilateral or discriminatory treatment to Pakistan on the nuclear issue and the appreciation of Pakistan's security concerns by the United States. He said this is a significance change in the American policy after an impasse of about five years.

Replying to a question, he said the United States has also assured Pakistan to return the defense equipment sent to America for repair before the enforcement of the Pressler Amendment.

The foreign minister made it clear that Pakistan is not ready to open its nuclear installations for unilateral inspection. He said the government is aware of its responsibilities toward national defense and to meet its requirements. Pakistan's options for procurement of defense equipment are also open.

About Pakistan-Iran relations, he said Pakistan enjoys the best of relations with its brotherly country.

[Hong Kong AFP in English at 1417 GMT on 17 April in a report on the news conference adds: "Pakistan does not share Washington's view that Iran is a threat to stability in the Middle East, Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said here Monday.

"'We do not share their views' on the matter, he told reporters, adding that Iran was not discussed during the official US visit of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who returned home Sunday.

"'They are entitled to their views as we are to ours,' Ali said, adding that Pakistan's relations with Iran were 'good' and they would remain so.

"'We have no threat from Iran,' the foreign minister said."]

Commentary on Bhutto Visit to Washington

Visit Brings 'New Dimension'

BK1604104595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 15 Apr 95

[Commentary by Waqar Aziz]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] After a 10-day state visit to the United States, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto returns home tomorrow. During her visit, she met President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, key congressmen, leaders of public opinion, and businessmen. Pakistan—a longtime ally of the United States—has lately been under pressure from the latter for differences of perception on the nuclear question. The prime minister's visit needs to be seen in this perspective. The kind of response she received can be gauged from the fact that the U.S. Congress, which only two years back wanted Pakistan to be placed on the list of states sponsoring terrorism, passed a resolution to welcome her.

The prime minister presented Pakistan's case on the discriminatory nature of the Pressler Amendment, unjustified holding of military equipment, regional approach to the nuclear nonproliferation, missile problem in South Asia, and Kashmir being the main source of regional destabilization. The prime minister argued her points so forcefully that the U.S. president conceded that Pakistan had been dealt with unfairly and pledged to work for rectification of the earlier mistakes. The prime minister without compromising on any of Pakistan's declared policies not only got a sympathetic hearing from the Americans for her point of view but also won a place to remove these unjust irritants.

During her visit she neither begged nor conceded anything but went for a relationship of partnership and corporate linkage based on the mutuality of interests, honor and dignity. The prime minister made clear to the United States that Pakistan has been its ally and now that the Cold War is over we expect that we shall be treated equally and there shall be no discrimination between Pakistan and India. Pakistan is not going to roll back, freeze or subject its nuclear program to unilateral verification. It cannot accept anything that is discriminatory. As explained by the prime minister, one dimension of the problems with the United States on the Pressler sanctions is that Pakistan had purchased equipment, including F-16's, and paid money for that. It is not fair that neither the equipment has been delivered nor the money has been returned.

President Clinton agreed with the prime minister's point of view and openly declared that it is not right for the United States to keep the money and the equipment. He also agreed that the Pressler law is defective and he would ask the Congress to show some flexibility on the Pressler Amendment which has failed to achieve its objectives.

The fact is that the Pressler Amendment has caused a setback to the process by encouraging India not to accept any proposal for nonproliferation. India has not only detonated a nuclear device in 1974 but is also engaged in a missile program to build short and long-range missiles, thus endangering Pakistan's security.

The Kashmir dispute also figured prominently during the prime minister's visit. The United States not only reiterated its stand that Kashmir is a disputed territory but also offered mediation. Apart from this, the prime minister's visit, memorandums of understanding covering investment of huge amount of $6 billion were also signed but the greatest achievement of the Prime Minister's visit to the United States lies in its success to give a new dimension and orientation to the Pakistan-U.S. ties.

Hailed as 'Unsuccessful'

BK1904021095 Islamabad KHABRAIN in Urdu 18 Apr 95 p 10

[Editorial: "Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Stance and the Voice of America"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that her visit was successful. The United States acknowledged Kashmir as a disputed territory. She was addressing a news conference in Islamabad after returning from a 10-day visit to the United States. She said she raised the Kashmir issue during talks with U.S. officials because it is a pivotal factor in South Asian security. U.S. mediation is needed to resolve the issue in accordance with UN resolutions and the aspirations of the people of Kashmir. She said that relations between Pakistan and the United States, which were deteriorating every day, have improved because of her visit.

If the prime minister made it clear to the United States during her visit that Pakistan wants understanding and the development of relations based on equality, what difference does it make? This is what the Pakistani prime minister said, not President Clinton. Bhutto even said the U.S. leaders listened sympathetically to the Pakistani view that the Pressler Amendment should be abrogated, its belief that the aircraft should be supplied along with the other weapons in exchange for the funds already paid for them, and the its stance on bilateral trade and the Kashmir issue. President Clinton termed the Kashmir issue a threat to peace in the region and offered to play the role of a mediator to resolve it. We consider all of these things mere "dreams and ideas."

When has the United States ever honored its agreements with Pakistan in the past that it will do so now? If the United States wants to be a mediator on Kashmir, it should challenge [lalkarna chahiye] India within a few days the way the United States and its allies challenged Iraq on the Kuwait issue and devastated it. This is not new. The U.S. Government has carried out several such operations in the past. If the Pakistani prime minister says the U.S. Government has agreed to mediate on the Kashmir issue and it has actually made the offer, then the good thing is that Pakistan will enjoy the support of a big power on this matter. It might brighten the chances that the mediation will achieve a solution in favor of Pakistan. As mentioned, however, this is mere wishful thinking. Those who think this way and who trust the U.S. authorities live in a fool's paradise. The greatest proof of this is a report broadcast by the Voice of America that the hopes pinned to the visit regarding national and economic matters could not be fulfilled. This has become evident after the Pakistani prime minister's meeting with the U.S. President; that is, the U.S. leader only said that he would try to amend the Pressler Amendment, under which military and economic aid to Pakistan has been suspended since 1990. We would like to make it clear that this is not an easy task. President Clinton's Democratic Party does not have the majority in the Senate or the House of Representatives with which he could easily amend the Pressler Amendment.

Another report said that although Benazir Bhutto announced that agreements were concluded during her visit for $6 billion worth of investment in Pakistan, their status is more like memorandums because these pledges cannot be fulfilled due to the Pressler Amendment.

On the one hand, Bhutto says the United States has offered to mediate on the Kashmir issue, but on the other, the Voice of America clearly says that the United States will play mediator only if the two countries accept it as a mediator. We would like to point out that in view of the special relations between the present U.S. government and its leaders and India and its leaders, how can we expect that Pakistan will start receiving U.S. weapons, that the consignment of F-16 planes we paid for will be sent to us, or that the money paid by Pakistan will be refunded? It was the objective of the Pressler Amendment to bar Pakistan from receiving all these things from the United States. Even if the U.S. President openly says that the supply of items to Pakistan should begin as per the previous agreement, it is not going to work. It is America; not Pakistan, where everything the head of government says is accepted. Nothing is done there without securing the approval of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Pressler Amendment was ratified by both houses.

On mediation in Kashmir, it is an accepted fact that the United States will not play mediator on this issue. Even if it does so just to please the Pakistani leaders, can anyone guarantee that the decisions reached under U.S. mediation will be favorable to Pakistan or impartial? We have already said that the present U.S. government has special relations with India. Given this, the United States cannot decide in favor of Pakistan.

It is therefore obvious that the Pakistani prime minister's visit to the United States has been unsuccessful, although salvos are being fired and false propaganda is being spread. The advertisements, rallies and processions, distribution of sweets, and parties are only being held to find a way to distribute national assets among the government's own people. This is why the Pakistan Muslim League-N [Nawaz

Group—PML-N] has raised questions about the reception accorded to the prime minister upon her return from the U.S. visit. They say that Benazir Bhutto has been unable to get the Pressler Amendment repealed and did not succeed in obtaining the F-16's or the funds paid for them. Then why this reception? How can this visit be called successful?

PML-N Information Secretary Mushahed Hussain has pointed out that an $80 million commission has been collected on a submarine deal. Another $200 million—equivalent to the price of 10 F-16's—changed hands in the F-16 deal. This is a discrepancy about which several other questions are being raised. It is being asked whether the total number of F-16's is 28 or 38. The people have started to take this seriously. They are asking why their government is fooling them.

Sri Lanka

LTTE Rebels Attack Navy Boats; Truce Broken

Forces on 'Maximum Alert'

BK1904034295 Hong Kong AFP in English 0323 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, April 19 (AFP)—Tamil rebels Wednesday [19 April] blew up two navy boats off northeastern Sri Lanka, killing at least 11 sailors, wounding 23 others and breaking a three-month old truce in the island's northeast, military sources said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) used frogmen to blow up two navy gunboats berthed at the northeastern port of Trincomalee in a pre-dawn attack coinciding with a rebel ultimatum to the government, the sources said.

"It was a well-planned attack. The two boats were attacked separately within an hour. Eleven sailors were killed and 23 have been wounded. Security forces have been placed on maximum alert," a military source said.

Another military official said there had been extensive damage to the two boats, and that the navy was continuing a search for survivors.

The attack came just nine days after suspected LTTE guerrillas killed two soldiers outside a northern military base on the eve of a fourth round of peace talks between the two sides.

The deaths of the two soldiers were the first killings since the truce came into effect January 8 in the northeast aimed at creating the appropriate environment for peace talks to end the island's ethnic conflict.

Wednesday's rebel strike also came just a week after the government agreed to key LTTE demands: the lifting of a ban on transporting fuel to northern areas under rebel control and removal of restrictions on fishing in the north.

The government decision came at the conclusion of a fourth round of talks in the rebel stronghold in the northern city of Jaffna, but the LTTE had apparently insisted on two other demands.

Besides the lifting of the ban on fuel and fishing, the LTTE had also demanded the government dismantle a key army camp in the north and allow its cadres to carry weapons into government-held areas in the east.

The negotiations, which got underway in August, had been deadlocked for three months from January during which both sides engaged in a war of words that culminated with the LTTE issuing two separate ultimatums.

The LTTE had initially said it would review its participation in the peace process if the government did not meet the rebel demands by March 28, but the rebels postponed the ultimatum for Wednesday.

Eleven Deaths Confirmed

BK1904112295 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] has attacked two naval boats in Trincomalee, killing 11 sailors. The operational headquarters of the Defense Ministry says that the number of injured is 21. The attack took place at around 0100 this morning.

One of the two vessels which was berthed at the Trincomalee naval jetty was completely destroyed. The two vessels were Vanasuru and Surya. The Defense Ministry further says that severe damage has been caused to the other vessels.

Army Issued 'Shoot-To-Kill' Orders

BK1904132595 Hong Kong AFP in English 1313 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] April 19 (AFP)—The truce between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tiger rebels collapsed Wednesday as the insurgents withdrew from peace negotiations and attacked a navy gunboat, leaving 16 sailors and rebels dead.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga responded with a statement cancelling all concessions made to the rebels during recent peace talks, and the Sri Lankan military issued shoot-to-kill orders to defend army bases.

The truce with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) began on January 8.

"In view of the unilateral decision taken by the LTTE to terminate the cessation of hostilities agreement and to start hostilities, the government is compelled to reconsider some of its decisions," the statement said.

"The relaxation of restrictions of fishing ... dated 14 April 1995 is cancelled forthwith," the statement said adding that a ban on 19 items, including fuel, was being reimposed in Tamil-dominated areas.

Kumaratunga's office said in the four-page statement that the LTTE had resumed hostilities without giving 72 hours notice as stipulated in the truce agreement.

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